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The Rescue.

See page 177.

THE

# CAPTIVE BOY

IN

TERRA DEL FUEGO:

BEING

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE OF THE LOSS OF THE SHIP  
MANCHESTER, AND THE ADVENTURES OF  
THE SOLE WHITE SURVIVOR.

BY MRS. P. A. HANAFORD,

AUTHOR OF "THE YOUNG CAPTAIN," "LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN," ETC.

FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS.



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P R E F A C E.  

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THE interest always felt in narratives of shipwreck and adventure, and the desire to add a little to the limited knowledge already obtained of Terra del Fuego, are deemed sufficient apology for presenting this volume to the public.

The narrative is received as unquestionably correct by all who are acquainted with the young lad whose sad experience is here recorded. Having had a personal acquaintance with him from childhood, numbering him at one time among my pupils, it is my privilege to bear testimony to his good nature and good sense. He was from early youth fond of reading, and it was with a mind unusually well stored for one of his years that he departed on this disastrous voyage with his parents. It is therefore reasonable to presume that he saw

correctly all that passed around him, and has narrated truthfully those facts of which he took cognizance.

The story has been penned with mournful satisfaction by one who would here bear friendly testimony to the virtues of the departed; and who, in submitting it to the reader, does so with a grateful recognition of that Hand which delivered the youthful captive out of the power of barbarians, and restored him to his childhood's land once more.

It should be added that the "Captive Boy" has recently been a soldier in the Union Army, and received in battle a severe wound, from whose sad effects he will probably never fully recover. It is hoped he will be benefited by the proceeds from the sale of this volume to those who will honor one whose patriotism did not allow the suffering of former years to prevent him from periling his life in defense of the "dear old flag."

P. A. H.

READING, MASS.

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THE  
CAPTIVE BOY IN TERRA DEL FUEGO.

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CHAPTER I.

THE DEPARTURE.

“Adieu! adieu! my native shore  
Fades o’er the waters blue;  
The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,  
And shrieks the wild sea-mew.  
Yon sun, that sets upon the sea,  
We follow in his flight;  
Farewell awhile to him and thee!  
My native land, good night!”

THE meridian sun sent his warm rays down upon the blue waters of New York harbor on the seventh day of April, 1854, as a little boat left the shore near the Battery, and rapidly conveyed a gentleman and lady to a ship which had been lying off the Battery two days, waiting for a full complement of seamen. It was now ready for their reception, and for a speedy departure on a voyage across the stormy Atlantic; round

bleak, inhospitable Cape Horn, far up the more placid waters of the Pacific, to Valparaiso, thence to Panama, Callao, and the Chincha Islands.

A prosperous voyage was anticipated, and with high hopes and buoyant hearts, the captain and his wife, for such were the gentleman and lady in the boat, stepped on board the good ship "Manchester," and greeted their youngest son, Thomas Edward, who was to accompany them. Then, while the lady went into their cabin, which was commodiously arranged on deck, to make a few preparations for future comfort should dreaded sea-sickness make its appearance, her husband, Captain Alexander H. Coffin, gave orders for the last few duties to be performed ere, with her anchor apeak, and sails set to the noontide breeze, his ship might leave the vicinity of wharves and spires, and go proudly careering toward her destined port as if a "thing of life."

Obedient to the captain's orders, the anchor was weighed; but still the vessel lingered, for the mate was not yet at his post. He was a cousin to the captain, and a fellow-townsman—



both being from the island of Nantucket, in which one of the owners of the "Manchester" also resided; and it was with real kindness of heart that Captain Coffin patiently awaited the arrival of his first officer. Not so the pilot. With the characteristic impatience of men in his vocation, who see the necessity, not of "making hay while the sun shines," but of spreading the canvass while the breeze is propitious, he blamed the mate for his tardiness.

Meanwhile, where was the absent one? Taking a last sad farewell of his young and lovely wife beneath the tall trees which render the Battery so beautiful. Who can wonder that the sands of Time's hour-glass ran swiftly in those parting moments! None, surely, who have ever tasted the bitterness of a similar draught, when about to separate from the loved ones of the home-circle, will wonder at the unwonted delay of him who was ever after, as ever before, punctual at the call of duty on shipboard. Even the rough pilot would have curbed his impatience had he known that on that beautiful wave-washed Battery the mate and his wife were holding their last conversa-

tion on earth. Never again were they to meet on this side of the Jordan of death. And this not only because, as will be seen in the progress of this narrative, the mate was to find a watery grave; but also from the fact that the call of death was to sound ere long through the inner temple of her being, and she too was to close her eyes to all things earthly, and open them only in the regions of immortality. "Have they not met ere now?"

When all were on board, the ship soon passed rapidly out of the harbor, whose waters were thronged by vessels of every size and shape, from the stately ocean-ship to the little steam-tug, from the gallant frigate to the diminutive, but no less useful, pilot-boat. Ere long they were off soundings, beyond all danger of rocks and shoals, and the pilot left them, taking with him, as usual, messages of love and remembrance in hastily written notes to those who were fast receding from them in the distance. No doubt, to the noble heart of the captain, and to the sensitive, maternal bosom of his wife, came many a thought of home and children in that hour of departure. One son was with

them; but his elder brother, and younger sister, their only daughter, were left on the far-off island of their birth.

As the shadows of evening drew on, the good ship reached the long, high swells of old ocean, and sea-sickness began to assert its sway over the captain's wife, who had seldom before invaded Neptune's domains. Her son, who was also unused to a sea-life, was not exempt from the infliction, but he recovered in three days.\*

The cargo of the "Manchester" was composed of lumber and coal, and the design of the owners was to have her return laden with guano from the Chincha Islands. Her owners were

\* The following is a complete list of those who composed the company on board the "Manchester" at the time of her departure from New York, a list prepared by the sole white survivor: Alexander Hall Coffin, captain; Eliza Ann Coffin, captain's wife; Thomas Edward Coffin, captain's son; Charles Henry Pitman, first mate; Joseph Francis, steward; John Alexander, cook—all of Nantucket, Mass.; David Rees Evans, second mate, Wales, G. B.; James H. Butler, seaman, Baltimore, Md.; William Johnson, seaman, Baltimore, Md.; Leven Wilson, seaman, Baltimore, Md.; Edward Bennet, seaman, Newport, R. I.; Robert Joshua, seaman, Kingston, Jamaica; William H. Fisher, seaman, New York, N. Y.; John Cumberland, seaman, Jamaica; Joseph Green, seaman, New Providence; William Richards, seaman, New Jersey; Robert Wells, seaman, Boston, Mass.

Messrs. Edward W. Gardner, of Nantucket, and William R. Rodman, of New Bedford. The ship, though not a new one, was supposed to be in excellent order when she left New York. Only two days after leaving Sandy Hook, there bidding adieu to North America, they encountered one of those severe storms which rage so furiously in the region of the Gulf Stream, and often sweep across the track of vessels which are obliged to sail in that vicinity with such violence as to accomplish their shipwreck and destruction. At one time during this storm some of their sails were "carried away." The nearest land was supposed to be their loved island-home, Nantucket, but that was a hundred and sixty miles away. No doubt their minds often reverted to the scenes and the dear ones which were on that island. Yet they could not have desired to be near the island, unless they could be safely on shore, for they well knew the perils which exist in the vicinity of their sea-beat home. They had gazed too often from their pleasant residence (in the little village of Siasconset, on the eastern side of that island) far off upon the broad Atlantic when the storm-king

was riding the billows, and the mighty waves, with a hoarse voice, beat against the bluff upon which the village is situated, not to be able to realize that there is as much truth as poetry in the words which were once addressed by some poet to Nantucket :

“Thy fatal shores and sandy shoals,  
Round which the foaming white cap rolls,  
All hopes of safety blast;  
The pale, affrighted sailor eyes  
The dangers that around him rise,  
And turns away aghast.”

The ship leaked badly from the effects of the storm, and Capt. Coffin at first deemed it advisable to steer for the Western Islands, and stop long enough at Fayal for all needful repairs. But one day, when the ship had nearly reached that port, a calm came on. The glassy waves reflected the light of the blazing sun almost without a ripple. The long, low swells gently undulated the surface of the ocean, and from out no quarter of the horizon came the faintest breezes.

Capt. Coffin determined to improve this occasion for the benefit of the ship which he commanded, and with his usual ingenuity, bravery,

and industry, caused himself to be lowered over the side of the ship, and made a careful examination for the purpose of discovering the extent of the injury the ship had sustained. He found the leak to be "in the wood-ends from the head-knees up," a phrase which sailors and ship-carpenters will readily comprehend if others do not, and he soon stopped it by caulking.

Thus they were once more in a condition to proceed to their desired haven, and so they went rapidly on toward the Southern Cross. How they watched the stars at evening, and pointed out to each other those with which they were familiar at home; and when the North Star sank in the far-off northern horizon, as they crossed the equator and sailed on southward, how they sighed as they missed it and its surrounding constellations from their firmament, because it seemed then as if another link was severed in the chain which bound them to their home and the dear ones far away. Then they realized, more fully than ever before, how far they were wandering from that sea-girt isle and its familiar scenes. But God, in infinite mercy, wisely hid their earthly future from them, and

hope was yet strong in the bosoms of all on board, that they should return in safety to the loved ones left behind.

They were favored with pleasant weather after the leak was stopped, and the ship made great headway until they were within a few degrees of the equator. Then came a portentous calm. Far and near the waves slept beneath the scorching heat of that tropical sun. Not a breath of air could be felt. The extreme sultriness betokened danger, as, in a tropical clime, the fiercest tornadoes are generally preceded by a sultry calm. It was the last Sabbath in May, and the quietness was in keeping with the sacred hours; but out there in mid-ocean, the heavens above, and the ocean-mirror reflecting the heavens in the waters beneath them, till they almost seemed to hang in the atmosphere, with no sound of Sabbath-bell to call them by its holy music to the house of prayer, it was almost oppressive. Evening came on. As the sun sank below the far-distant ocean horizon a light breeze sprang up, and every effort was made on board the ship to take advantage of the favoring wind. Darker grew the

evening sky, and suddenly, about eight o'clock, a heavy squall struck the ship. The wind blew with great violence, and the rain came down in torrents. As is frequently the case when these sudden squalls occur, its approach was not perceived in season to take in sail and prepare for the shock, consequently the damage to the ship was greater than would otherwise have ensued. In the brief period of about ten minutes the flying jib-boom and fore and main-top-gallant mast were carried away, and the mizzen top-mast taken off "flush with the cap." To seamen, and many others in maritime towns, these sea-phrases will be sufficiently perspicuous; and to those who are not *au fait* in such matters, it will at least be evident that a considerable amount of damage was done.

In a marvelously brief period the storm had passed, the moon shone brightly, and orders were given to "clear away the wreck." The brave, active seamen, headed by their worthy chief mate, sprang aloft to cut and unreeve the rigging, which, being but partially torn away, caused the remnants of the shattered masts to hang to that which was still in its place.



Captain Coffin remarked to his son at this time that when on board the "American," (a ship which he once commanded,) the topmast, after being cleared away at the end of a gale, fell into the ocean with such momentum as to leap up again entirely out of the elastic element, although it was sixteen feet in length.

The next day after the above-mentioned squall the crew got out all the old spars which were on board, and rigged them into what is called, in seamen's phraseology, stump top-gallant masts. A portion of that which was broken or torn off on the evening before was used to repair the damages. On board ship everything which they possess that ever enters into the composition or "fitting out" of a vessel is saved, as in some way it may be made useful. As the mizzen top-mast of the ship was entirely gone, the "Manchester" was transformed into a bark, having no square sails on the after mast.

On the sixteenth of June an event occurred which, solemn and impressive everywhere, is doubly so at sea, where the loss of one person, though not a relative or a friend, is felt more than the loss of many similar persons on shore.

This event was the death of a colored man by the name of Joseph Green. He was a native of one of the Bahama Islands. He had been ill nearly all of the voyage thus far, and was supposed to be suffering from the effects of a slow poison which had been secretly administered to him by some enemy in one of the numerous dens of robbers, as the low seamen's boarding-houses may too often be justly termed. Most cheering is the fact that philanthropists, having had their attention drawn to this fact, are busied in devising and executing plans by which the free-hearted, too trustful sailor can have a *home* when on shore, where his hard earnings will not be drawn out of his hands, or dishonestly taken from him.

It was the intention of Captain Coffin to stop at St. Catherine's, and there have the ship repaired, while the sick man should be placed on shore. But the winds were contrary, and they were reluctantly compelled to give up the idea of setting their feet at that time on *terra firma*. Two days after passing San Catherine's the colored man died. It may therefore be supposed that the tide of life had already ebbed too far

for the balmy breezes of that tropic isle to have restored him to health.

The captain's wife, in the kindness of her womanly nature, and with that sympathy in sickness which her friends at home well knew her to possess, was in the habit of visiting the sick man frequently, and ministering, as far as possible, to his wants, though his gratitude was far from being commensurate with her laudable endeavors. He was evidently too ignorant to appreciate her kindness. As an evidence of his thorough want of education and sound sense, may be stated the fact that the other sailors having caught an albatross, this sick man desired to be taken on deck to see it. He was so superstitious as to believe that the capture of this bird would result in his speedy death unless he could see it. His companions, though most of them were colored like himself, did not agree with him in this superstition, and as also he seemed too ill to be moved, they refrained from granting his request. The following day his spirit took its everlasting flight. No doubt his superstitious idea so preyed upon his weakened mind and worn-out body as to hasten his death.

After a sufficient delay, preparations were made for his ocean burial.

“ The ship heaves to, and the funeral rite  
O’er the lifeless corse is said ;  
And the rough tar’s cheeks with tears are bright  
As he lowers the silent dead.”

And there, far out upon the Atlantic, beneath a tropic sky, many hundreds of miles away from her early home, where she first learned to read the Scriptures, Mrs. Coffin stood by her husband’s side, near the silent dead, with all the ship’s company gathered around, and read aloud that heart-cheering and sublime chapter in St. Paul’s Epistle to the Corinthians, where we are taught most clearly of the resurrection. Captain Coffin followed his wife’s reading in the solemn utterance of a prayer suitable for the occasion, imploring that this solemn event might be sanctified to those who were left on earth. With uncovered heads the crew listened attentively and respectfully, and at the close of these simple burial services the body was launched into the bosom of the mighty deep.

A large proportion of the persons on board the “ Manchester ” were of African descent,

All, save the captain and his family, the two mates, and the cook, were colored. This circumstance arose from the fact that men were scarce, and this colored crew had agreed to sail together. Captain Coffin preferred shipping them to waiting for a crew of white men.

It may be here remarked that the usual variety of objects seen at sea were observed by those on board the "Manchester." To the captain's wife in particular, who had never been so far out upon the ocean, and who possessed a keen relish for the curious and the beautiful in nature, the sights peculiar to a sea-voyage were very welcome, and never was anything worthy of note desiered upon the surface of the ocean without her attention being called to it. At different periods along the voyage were seen a species of flying-fish, and also those fishes called by the seamen "skip-jacks." The latter much resemble a mackerel in size and appearance, and frequently accompany a ship for months in great numbers, swimming just below the surface of the water. Not unfrequently was Mrs. Coffin called to notice the wonderful phosphorescent appearance of the mighty deep, caused by the

presence of myriads of little sea-animals, of a jelly-like substance, and not more than half an inch in length. Nor did the larger inhabitants of the deep fail to be represented on their voyage. Even the sperm whale was sometimes seen spouting around them, and porpoises were frequently beheld, apparently at play, sporting, with huge antics, very near the ship. On one occasion Captain Coffin dexterously caught one of these sea-hogs, as they are sometimes called, by means of a line, to which was attached a kind of harpoon, differing materially, however, from those used for the capture of whales. Albicores, and even sharks, were sometimes seen following in the wake of the ship. The albatross, as we have seen, was also one of their visitors. This aquatic fowl resembles a gull, and is sometimes called a "great gull." It is of the size of a pelican, or larger, very voracious, preying on fish and small water-fowls. With its back of spotted brown, and its white breast, it presents a very pleasant appearance, and is usually a welcome visitor on board a ship. The albatross is sometimes used for food, though it is not very palatable. It can be caught by baiting a hook

with fat pork, and then throwing the line to which it is attached into the water. There is another method by which they may be caught, which is to allow several fathoms of fine twine to blow out in the direction of the birds, and then throw out something which is tempting to them, and which will float upon the top of the water. Hovering over the desirable "bait," their wings will become entangled in the twine, and then they can be easily caught.

But to return to the voyage. Two days after the body of the deceased mariner was committed to the deep, the "Manchester" reached the English Banks off Rio de la Plata. Here they were met by strong gales of wind, which so retarded their progress that a week and a half elapsed ere they could leave the vicinity of these banks. They then shaped their course direct for Montevideo, where they hoped to have the ship so repaired that they could proceed in safety, for ever since that severe squall struck the ship she had leaked badly.

It was the memorable fourth of July, 1854, when they sailed up the harbor of Montevideo, and cast anchor for the first time since leaving

home. They left New York about meridian one day in April, had sailed over a vast extent of water, and now anchored before the capital of Uruguay at high noon in July. The anniversary of their nation's birth, their country's jubilee, was not forgotten, and their arrival was appropriately noticed by a salute from the guns of a French frigate and an English man-of-war which lay there, and whose flags were hoisted in honor of the day, and out of compliment to the American ship on such an occasion.

In a short time the captain went on shore, taking with him his wife and son. There was little to be seen of any great interest; but the mere privilege of treading *terra firma* was very satisfactory, after having been on shipboard for so many months. And then the novelty of the appearance which Montevideo presented supplied the place, in part, of whatever else was wanting. The houses were mostly very low, and tiles were used upon the roof instead of shingles. The few tokens apparent of enterprise and industry were to be seen among the English and Americans who were among the foreign residents of the place.



There was an American consul there, whose wife and daughters were particularly kind to Mrs. Coffin, and she occasionally went ashore and spent the day with them, though her home was still on board the ship. The windows of the houses were usually open most of the time; but to those unaccustomed to the climate of Montevideo the practice was an uncomfortable one, as the air seemed somewhat chilly in the shade. Fruit grows there in large quantities, and the ship's company were plentifully supplied with oranges at a low price. They remained there twenty-four days, partly in order to have the chambers of the pumps fitted, as they were so worn with fine coal as to deliver but little water.

When all was finished they took on board their last supply of fresh provisions and fruit, and bade adieu to their new acquaintance with hopes as high as when they sailed along the shores of Manhattan. But, alas! never again were the feet of some of them to press the soil of mother earth. They saw in Montevideo the last human faces they were ever to behold, save those of their own crew, while they remained

on earth. "Man proposes but God disposes;" and while mortal fancy pictured the performance of their projected voyage in safety and with success, the Divine Disposer of human events was designing for them a far different fate, and for the voyage a far different termination than that which they anticipated.

Yet who shall murmur? "Just and true are all thy ways, thou King of saints!" Inscrutable wisdom, which "beholdeth the end from the beginning," ordained the seemingly sad result, and He "who doeth all things well" will vindicate his purposes in the "exceeding glory" which shall follow affliction in that world where the vail is lifted, and we "see as we are seen, and know as we are known."

## CHAPTER II.

## SECOND DEPARTURE AND SHIPWRECK.

"Once more upon the waters ; yet once more !

And the waves bound beneath me as a steed  
That knows his rider. Welcome, to their roar !

Swift be their guidance wheresoe'er it lead !  
Though the strained mast should quiver as a reed,

And the rent canvas, fluttering, strew the gale,  
Still must I on ; for I am as a weed

Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to sail

Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail."

A FAVORABLE breeze sprang up on the 28th of July, 1854, and, as all things were ready, the sails were hoisted, and once more the good ship "Manchester" was outward bound. Kind hearts, who had assisted in making their brief sojourn comfortable and pleasant, cherished their memory, and wished them a prosperous voyage, ignorant of the allotments of Providence which awaited them. Had those friends on shore been gifted with that sad endowment, "second-sight," they might have bidden that ship farewell, prophetically, in the language of Mrs. Hemans :

“Go in thy glory o’er the ancient sea,  
Take with thee gentle winds thy sails to swell;  
Sunshine and joy upon thy streamers be;  
Fare thee well, bark, farewell!

“A long farewell! Thou wilt not bring us back  
All whom thou bearest far from home and hearth.  
Many are thine, whose steps no more shall track  
Their own sweet, native earth!

“Some thou wilt leave below the sounding waves;  
Still shall they live though tempests o’er them sweep;  
Never may flower be strewn above their graves,  
Never may sister weep!

“And thou, the billow’s queen! even thy proud form  
On our glad sight no more, perchance, may swell;  
Yet God alike is in the calm and storm—  
Fare thee well, bark! farewell!

The “Manchester” had scarcely left the harbor of Montevideo ere she encountered two very severe gales; and a few days after they had “weathered” a third storm, on a foggy morning they discovered land. They were headed directly toward it, and but for the providential lifting of the fog might have been shipwrecked there. They found by their charts that this island was one of the Falkland group. Its shore was rocky, and the eminences upon it were covered with snow. A few days after, “Land, ho!” was again shouted, and their eyes

rested on the mountainous, snow-covered island of "Staten-Land." No verdure was to be seen. They were drawing southward toward the regions of eternal ice and snow. The "Manchester" was favored with a short run to Cape Horn, but at last, after a succession of brisk and favoring breezes, they were again becalmed, and remained thus about thirty-six hours. During this calm the vessel was swept by a rapid current toward an island lying off Cape Horn, and which could be seen in the distance. The island appeared to be mountainous, and the summits of those mountains being crowned with snow, reflected the light of the sun, and presented to the spectators on board the "Manchester" an appearance of dazzling brightness. Yet they dreaded a near approach to the island, for in such a calm they could not withstand the current, and feared to be drawn among the rocks around the shining island to their entire destruction.

Do not the vain and sinful pleasures of earth sometimes appear thus dazzling, while amid the unnatural calm of a mind at peace, because thoughtless of the future, the soul is swiftly hur-

ried forward by the current of habit and popular influence, till, unless assisted to depart by favoring gales from heaven, it also is lured to destruction?

At last a breeze sprang up in season for the rescue of the "Manchester," and once more she was out of danger. As evening came on, however, the breeze increased to a gale, and the gale waxed more and more furious. Sail after sail was taken in, and the ship steered southwest, till they were in about  $58^{\circ}$  south latitude. The ship appeared to be perfectly tight, no leak being discovered.

Thus they went on till about the 25th of August without having been able to "take the sun," and marking their progress only by what is termed "dead reckoning." Land was as yet nowhere in sight. Strong currents were, however, perceived, which were probably setting toward shore. It was now deemed necessary to "keep a good look-out," as their position was not exactly known, and land was evidently near, though they did not imagine it to be quite so near as it really was. On the night of the 27th of August the captain ordered the watch to be

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exceedingly particular, observe every indication of danger, and call him on the first appearance of any cause for alarm. Early on the morning of the 28th the mate suddenly approached the cabin, which, as before stated, was on deck, and called out, "Captain Coffin, I see broken water!"

The captain leaped from his berth, looked out of the cabin window, and sprang on deck. It was quite dark, for in that latitude at that season the sun did not rise till a late hour.

Captain Coffin instantly ordered the crew to "make sail," as the current was carrying them toward what appeared in the distance, by the uncertain morning light, to be breakers. They had been under close-reefed main top-sail and fore top-mast staysail, as the wind was blowing very heavily. Before the captain's order could be obeyed the ship struck violently upon a sunken rock, not more than six feet square, over which the waves were wildly breaking.

Thomas Edward, the captain's son, was at that time in the cabin with his mother. He looked up at the clock when his father left, and saw that its hands denoted the hour of six A.M.

Then began the tragic scenes which will forever mark that day with black in his earthly calendar. Mrs. Coffin was awakened by the call of the mate, and she and her son lay silently listening to the rushing of the tumultuous waters and the various noises on deck. The ship struck in a few moments, and then followed loud voices on deck, as the captain hurriedly gave his orders, and the men responded. By this time Mrs. Coffin was up, and Thomas, seeing her out of her berth, inquired what had happened. "Rocks! rocks!" was her reply, in a tone implying that the ship was probably in great danger. Thomas rose to look out of the window, but it was still so dark he could see little, so he turned immediately round toward his mother, and at that moment the ship struck again with great violence, throwing her forward. This might have injured her seriously, but that her son was quick enough, and stood near enough to catch her in his arms, and so save her from falling.

All was now confusion on deck. The first time the ship struck forward of the fore chains, the second time aft the main chains. She had



drifted upon the rock, and fears were immediately entertained of total shipwreck. The sea broke tremendously all around and against them. The crew were soon engaged in cutting away the spars in order to lighten the ship, and orders were given to prepare the boats for their reception on any emergency. It seemed hardly possible that any boat could live in such a sea, yet they knew that they must "take to the boats" as a last resort. "Sound the pumps!" was the loud cry of the captain, and the order was instantly obeyed, but with trepidation, and their fears proved to be well founded, for it was soon discovered that the hold was nearly full of water. With great industry they commenced pumping, every one seeming willing to do what he could to avert the threatened danger. Even the captain's wife offered to take her turn at the pump, but her husband would not allow it. After pumping about one hour and a half they discovered that their efforts had only lightened the ship about three inches. This seemed rather disheartening. Still they toiled on. Life was precious to them all, and for life they knew they were laboring. The ship, as has been said,

was partly loaded with coal. This was a sad thing for those on board, for ere long the fine coal began to get into the pumps, choking the boxes, and rendering it impossible to work them at all. Tackles were therefore obliged to be rigged, and the pumps to be hoisted out and washed. But very soon they were again choked, and the same process was to be repeated. At the end of another hour the pumps were sounded, and the water was perceived to have risen two feet more. With unflagging zeal, and a glimmering of hope, they pumped on till about meridian, when they deemed it no longer possible to work any more with pumps, they were so often choked, and the water gained on them so fast. When they left off pumping there were four feet more of water in the ship. Half of the crew were now directed to prepare the boats for immediate use, and the other half to obtain the requisite quantity of bread and water.

Meantime Mrs. Coffin was in the cabin, outwardly calm, but inwardly struggling to preserve her trust in God. She busied herself in doing all that she could for the comfort of all

those who were engaged in pumping, irrespective of their name or color. In that hour of danger there were no distinctions. Among other deeds of thoughtful kindness, Mrs. Coffin took from a bag of nice, thick clothing, belonging to her husband, articles which would promote the comfort of the crew who were exposed to the inclement weather on deck, and desired its distribution among them, which was cheerfully accomplished.

One touching circumstance occurred while the crew were pumping, and Mrs. Coffin was calmly awaiting the result in the cabin, which may be mentioned; for these "little items," which are of such deep interest to those who were personally acquainted with this estimable lady, are of no less interest to the warmhearted reader. No parent can think of this mother taking out, as she did, the daguerreotypes of her beloved and far-off children, and looking upon them with a fear that she is about to leave the earth on which they dwell forever, without emotions of profoundest sympathy. Her first-born son and her only daughter were far away, and she felt as she gazed upon their pictures

that her mortal eyes would never again behold them in the flesh. From the first hour of their danger she had an impression that they would not escape shipwreck, and that she herself would not escape death. With mournful satisfaction she gazed upon the pictures of other relatives and friends, feeling, no doubt, that it was a privilege to view those silent but eloquent mementoes of dear ones far away, so lifelike as they were.

How valuable the discovery of Daguerre! As the mother in Mrs. Hale's pathetic song commencing, "The night was dark and fearful," longed for the morn to come that she might once more gaze upon her child, so might this mother have sighed in vain for one more look at a lifelike semblance of her children, had not modern science engaged the sun as an artist, and thus transferred with delightful accuracy the features of the subject for his pencil to the mirror-like plate of silver. How much joy has this valuable discovery afforded to the many who have thus been able to look upon their dear ones with the ever-remembered expression of countenance, though their eyes might have

been long closed in death, or years of time and miles of earth might separate them !

But to return to the ship. At two o'clock in the afternoon the boats were made ready to lower into the water. A yard was prepared, to which it was designed to move the head of each boat when lowered to prevent its dashing against the ship. They succeeded in getting two of their best boats over. But, just as they were congratulating each other on their success, the end of the yard moved toward one of the boats by the rolling of the ship, passed through it, and completely stove it, so that it was of no use whatever. This again was discouraging. Fortune seemed not to smile upon them, or, in better words, Providence did not seem to favor their escape from the doomed vessel.

They next attempted to get the life-boat over safely into the water. They hoisted her, and thought success was almost certain, when, suddenly, the ship rolled heavily to the leeward, the lashings gave way, and down came the boat on deck with a deafening crash and broke in pieces, thus becoming utterly useless. Then it seemed as if all hope fled, and as the sad acci-

dent happened some of the men groaned aloud. Only two boats were now left, one in the water and one on board, but both together were not large enough to take in all the crew with their provisions.

The captain, therefore, determined to stay by the ship. She did not remain on the rock where she struck, but was slowly drifting with the current. Captain Coffin hoped that as she had lumber on board she might remain long enough above water to float near to some land to which they could escape when she struck its shore. No land was as yet in sight. The weather was very unpleasant, the wind blowing very hard, and hail, rain, and snow alternating with each other. The officers and men all determined to remain with the captain. They were very obedient, and did not take the liberties which some sailors have taken in an hour of peril. Captain Coffin advised them, if they stayed on board, to cut away the masts, as that would lighten the ship somewhat, and they readily complied. Of course they could now have no sails up, so they drifted slowly on. At about three o'clock in the afternoon they saw

land afar off, on the verge of the horizon. They watched it as long as any light remained, and with the hope that they should reach it in safety, they made preparations to spend a long, uncomfortable, stormy, and dangerous night.

There was a good fire in the cabin, which, fortunately, was on deck. At about seven o'clock in the evening every soul came aft, and prepared to spend the night near each other. They could not expect much sleep, though almost utter exhaustion might beguile them into an occasional momentary doze.

It was desirable that some should watch, and a portion of the crew preferred to remain on top of the cabin, where they hoisted the spanker for shelter. It was a piercing cold night, and the rain beat upon them, while the wind howled, demon-like, around the dismantled ship. Nineteen human beings were there awaiting their doom, with only "a plank between them and eternity," and with every reason to suppose that plank would soon be submerged, and they be left to grapple with the king of terrors beneath the heaving billows of that stormy sea. Where could the troubled soul find consolation in an

hour like this? Where but in the word of God, and in communion with him by prayer! Captain Coffin read aloud in the precious Bible, whose great truths he had long believed.

After reading in the volume of inspiration, Captain Coffin offered a prayer for them all in their distress. All present seemed to unite with him; and afterward several of the men, secluding themselves from the view of the rest under a greatcoat, prayed again. After this season of solemn communion with their Creator, the captain and his little family communed with each other. Mrs. Coffin was still wonderfully sustained, and preserved her calmness, though she had no hope of a rescue from the impending danger, having said to her son and her husband also, in the early part of the day, "I don't expect to be saved."

Quietly sat the ship's company in and upon that cabin, waiting the result which all anticipated. A few words in a low tone only occasionally broke the solemn stillness. The stout-hearted captain strove to sustain his beloved wife in this hour of trial. She was exceedingly desirous to keep close to his dear side, with their





The Last Prayer.



precious son very near to both, and he was, on his part, equally unwilling to be separated from those so dearly loved in such an hour of peril.

When the hand of the little clock in the cabin pointed to the hour of nine the ship was discovered to be *full* of water. The sound of boxes and other loose articles below, could be distinctly heard as they were dashed against the ship and each other by the motion of the water in which they were submerged, while the vessel rolled from side to side. Just then the water could no longer be contained below, and as the ship sank lower and lower, it sprang up between the crevices near the mizzenmast. Seeing this evidence of the sure, though gradual, settling of the ship, some of the sailors were greatly alarmed, and the startling cry rang out on the evening air from some of those on the top of the cabin who saw the upspringing water, "We are lost! we are lost!" It sounded in the ears of the little company within the cabin like a death-knell, and deepened the solemn sadness of that awful hour.

The mate, Mr. Pitman, faithful in the discharge of his duties to the last, was on the out-

side of the cabin all night keeping the long and dreary watch. Unhappily, some of the colored men who were exposed to the fury of the elements with him, deemed it necessary to drink some kind of spirituous liquors which they had previously secured, and thus becoming partially intoxicated, were unpleasant companions in that season of weariness and distress. Yet there was no drunken revelry, and the serious portion of the ship's company were therefore spared the dreadful scenes sometimes consequent upon the reckless conduct of shipwrecked sailors under the influence of intoxicating drinks. How strange that seamen, as a class, do not see this rock, Intemperance, amid the shoals and quicksands of life, looming up with fearful blackness, on which so many of their number have met with total shipwreck!

About ten o'clock that evening the waves swept over the deck of the ship. The water penetrated the cabin also, wetting the feet of the ill-fated company within the cabin. Thomas, perceiving that his mother sat with her feet in water, went to another part of the cabin and brought a bag of clothing, which he re-

requested permission to place under her feet. She told him it was of no avail ; but with filial love he persisted in doing all the little he could for her comfort, and she, appreciating his motive, consented. Soon the sides of the cabin began to feel the pressure of the waves as the ship sank lower and lower, and would bend in and out as if no stronger than willow. Very little was now said. Each communed with his own heart, and was still. O how many thoughts of home passed through the minds of those waiting watchers ! Who can tell the inward struggle as the sufferers thought of their far-distant friends, and feared they might never more behold them ! Who can tell how many anxious forebodings filled each heart as they thought of the scenes which might fill the hours of the coming day ! Blessed, yea, thrice blessed and happy were they who in that hour of deep peril could trust themselves and all they possessed of friends and property in the hands of God !

In the course of the night the watch reported a reef in sight. Tremblingly they thought of the danger which would probably accrue should the ship strike upon it. At three o'clock the ship

passed a rock safely. Still the hail, snow, and violent wind continued. At five minutes past five, as the clock in the cabin indicated, two reefs were reported. The ship now sank down close to the water's edge, or even below the water. They reached the reef. Suddenly the ship struck upon a portion of it stern first, and lost her rudder.

When she struck, those in the cabin rose to go out. There were Captain Coffin, his wife and son, the steward and two seamen, who moved together toward the door. There was no hurry, no confusion. Quietly they all walked through the water, which was more than ankle deep, opened the door, and went out into that bitter night of storm and darkness. Captain Coffin had placed his right arm around the waist of his wife to support her, and her son embraced her with his left arm. Thus they went forth, hoping to be saved together, if saved at all.

As they paused a moment near the door, the ship again striking, away went the mizzenmast by the board, carrying with it the entire top of the cabin, thus sweeping at one fell swoop nine of the ship's company to a watery grave. Their loud cry of despair and fright at the sudden

approach of death in a form so terrible, one moment tossed as a plaything on the surging billows, and the next struggling in the pitiless waves for the precious boon of life, was heard far above the roar of the winds and waters. Those who were then swept away were never afterward seen by the known survivors, and it is supposed that they all "sleep their last sleep" in the depths of that cold Antarctic Ocean.

"And first one universal shriek there rushed  
 Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash  
 Of echoing thunder, and then all was hushed,  
 Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash  
 Of billows; but at intervals there gushed,  
 Accompanied with a convulsive splash,  
 A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry  
 Of some strong swimmer in his agony."

One of those who were swept away at this time was the worthy mate of the ship, Mr. Charles Henry Pitman, of Nantucket. He was about thirty-six years of age, and left a widow (who soon followed him) and three children, little girls of much promise, but, alas! now sadly bereft of those tender parents who would have shielded and guided them along life's thorny path.

## CHAPTER III.

## B E R E A V E M E N T.

“What is the worst of woes that wait on age?  
What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?  
To view each loved one blotted from life's page,  
And be alone on earth as I am now.  
Before the Chastener humbly let me bow  
O'er hearts divided, and o'er hopes destroyed;  
Roll on, vain days, full reckless may ye flow,  
Since Time hath reft whate'er my soul enjoyed,  
And with the ills of old mine earlier years alloyed.”

AFTER the loss of their shipmates in a manner so sudden, less hope seemed to remain to the survivors. That awful shriek still rang in their ears even after its shrill sound ceased to echo over the wide waste of waters, and is yet remembered by the captain's son with sensations terrible but indescribable.

Standing near the cabin door, as above remarked, the captain, with the few who yet remained about him, looked forth on the scene of desolation. The only evidence that the ship was yet beneath them, was the fact that their



feet yet pressed her deck, and here and there portions which rose above the deck were dimly visible. Their feet were covered with the water which hid the deck from their view. Imagination fails to paint the discomfort and peril of that awful hour. Still stood the captain, his wife and son, supporting each other in that trying moment. And now, the wild waves thrust the ship again upon the rocks, which forced their rough passage through her, and suddenly, without any warning to those on board to escape, the ship, with a loud and awful crash, broke asunder lengthwise. A few who saw the event in season leaped on to one portion of the wreck; but breaking open as she did immediately beneath the feet of the devoted ones who were just stepping forward from the cabin door, the ship forsook them in their extremity, and, in a second of time, the surging, roaring billows had engulfed them. A moment more, and Captain Coffin had risen to the surface. He swam immediately toward a piece of the wreck, but his first thought was of those who sank with him beneath those boiling waters. As he gazed around, endeavoring to penetrate

the darkness, he saw one human form apparently striving to swim. He called aloud, "What poor soul is that?"

"It is Thomas," was the reply, in the well-known and joyfully-welcomed tones of the captain's son, and in a few moments they were side by side upon a portion of the stern of the vessel. Then both looked anxiously for any sign of another living being, especially to see if that beloved wife and mother had arisen to the surface of the ocean. But no trace of any of them was to be discovered.

A portion of the quarter-deck was near them, and soon drifted so nigh that the second mate, who had saved himself by jumping upon it as the ship was torn asunder, saw and recognized Captain Coffin. He called aloud, "Is Mrs. Coffin saved?" "No!" was the mournful reply from quivering lips and aching hearts. There were three on the wreck with the second mate, only one of whom was saved, Robert Nells, a colored man from Boston. This man had always been called "George" on board the ship because there was another man named Robert among the crew. As the companion of the cap-

tain's son, during his sojourn and captivity in Terra del Fuego, there will be frequent occasion to mention him hereafter. The other two who were on the quarter-deck never lived to reach the shore. One of them died, while floating on the wreck, from cold and exposure. The other was struck on the head by a rock and fatally injured when the wreck struck the land at last.

But the two pieces of the wreck did not float together. The stern of the vessel, on which floated the sorrow-stricken father and son, did not drift so fast as the other, and they were soon left to bear their bereavement with no one to speak a consoling word, save each to the other, while their hearts were overflowing with anguish. Down deep in those treacherous waters lay the lifeless form of that beloved wife, that precious mother, who had so lately stood near them, pressed their hands, and given them what proved to be the last parting kiss. Her loved and familiar voice would no more fall upon their ears while they walked the earth; and should they be saved themselves how sad the tidings they must convey to their far-off home, and how dreary that once happy home would be

without her presence! O! none can tell the bitterness of the cup which they then tasted. Bereavement is always unwelcome, always sad, but made tenfold more sad and solemn amid such distressing circumstances. Language cannot express the intensity of sorrow which filled the hearts of that loving husband and affectionate son.

Yet there was one ray of consolation amid the deep gloom which enshrouded that lonely couple floating on a piece of wreck far out upon the roaring surges. They were yet spared to each other, and could they but reach the land in safety might hope some day to return together to their home and friends.

Their situation at that time was, physically, exceedingly uncomfortable. Thoroughly drenched, their clothing water-soaked, without food or drink, and having eaten nothing for more than fourteen hours, they were far from anything like comfort. So intense, however, was their mental excitement, that they scarcely heard the howling of the wind as it blew so fiercely, lashing the waves into fury, or felt the frequent dash of the salt spray, or the pelting of the hail in their

faces. On, on they drifted; and as they were thus borne along Thomas Edward was led, by the force of association, to think of a book which he once read, entitled "Jack Halyard," and which contained a picture of a shipwreck and the escape of a survivor to the land on a portion of the wreck. Little did he suppose, as he sat by the pleasant, comfortable fireside of his happy home, and pored over the pages of a book so fascinating to boys of his age, that he should ever realize what was there dimly pictured, on a cold, dark, stormy night near the bleak, inhospitable coast of Cape Horn.

After drifting slowly nearly all day, they came to the land at a place about five miles from the scene of the shipwreck. The sun was just setting behind the high mountains, whose rocky sides were sparingly covered with stunted verdure, and whose summits were crowned with snow. The current had brought them to a place where the water was very smooth, and it was with great pleasure that they finally perceived that the piece of wreck on which Providence had safely borne them thither had grounded. The air was piercing cold, and they

hoped to find some shelter amid the rocks or dwarfish trees. A portion of the lumber which formed their ship's cargo was still on this part of the stern of the vessel, so that they could obtain a plank, over which, after properly adjusting it, they could easily pass to the shore. But they were not equal even to this slight task. In lifting the plank Captain Coffin fell into the water. It was, however, rather shallow there, and with his son's assistance he was soon upon the wreck again. At last, with sad but grateful hearts, they found themselves once more on *terra firma*. But now Captain Coffin was again uncomfortable with wet clothes. Their clothes had dried somewhat during the day, and Thomas was not as badly situated in that respect as his father, whose entire suit had been saturated during his last submersion.

Their first act was to endeavor to save some of the things which had floated thither from the wreck, and were now strewing the water near the shore, more especially because they hoped to find among them something which would serve for food. With joy, such as shipwrecked mariners or starving landmen alone can feel,

they discovered a barrel of flour. They hastened to it as fast as their weary limbs would permit. In trying to secure it Thomas fell into the water, but by his father's aid was rescued from the watery grave he himself had just almost miraculously escaped. They walked up from the shore where they had landed, seeking for a suitable place in which to spend the night, which was fast approaching. A spring of water was soon joyfully discovered, of which they quickly partook, having been very thirsty during the day. Near this spring they found a proper place for an encampment, and brought to it some boards, which they placed side by side, and on which they proposed to sleep that night. They then went down to the barrel of flour and tried to roll it up to the place they had just chosen. But their strength failed them. They were so thoroughly exhausted that both together could not roll up a single barrel of flour. But they felt the necessity of eating something that night, and accordingly they broke open the barrel, obtained some of the flour, mixed it with water, and then swallowed the unpalatable paste or dough. Of course they

could eat but little of this strange food, although hunger rendered it more inviting than it would otherwise have seemed. Flour and water, uncooked, were better than nothing, and they were grateful to God that they were thus rescued from starvation.

Having thus done all they could for their comfort, they sought repose in sleep, but not without bowing the knee in prayer, and, while they thanked God that their lives were saved, asking his divine protection during the night for themselves, and for any of their companions who might yet survive. They did not forget their sad bereavement, but prayed that it might be sanctified to them and to the far-distant loved ones who were yet to hear the sorrowful tidings. And then they sought repose. But, though now worn-out nature claimed some portion of the night for sleep, she could not secure for these shipwrecked sufferers the boon of forgetfulness. Often during the night did they live over again in dreams the sad scenes of the day; and their perturbed spirits prevented them from receiving the physical benefit which the sleep they did secure might, under other circum-



stances, have furnished. Besides, it was uncomfortably cold where they were lying, and they frequently found it advisable to rise and walk about in order to warm themselves by exercise. Toward morning, however, they obtained a little more sleep; but on attempting to arise, and commence the labors of the day, they found that the little strength which was left them the night before had almost utterly forsaken them. They could not remain standing a moment. But, gradually, some portion of their usual strength returned. Nature roused her recuperative powers, and, though still suffering from exhaustion, they were able to perform the few duties which devolved upon them.

On the previous night, before stretching themselves on their hard beds for repose, they offered, as before stated, a prayer for the protection of that Divine Being who is everywhere present; and now, on arising to their sad experience as lonely exiles from their far-distant homes, they again knelt, and Captain Coffin offered a prayer for guidance and protection through the day, thanking the beneficent Father who had so wonderfully preserved their lives. Though

he had been called to drink of a bitter cup in being thus suddenly and awfully bereft of the beloved companion of his youth and manhood, yet he was grateful that his life was still prolonged for the sake of his son, that he might perhaps, if Providence permitted, by his larger experience and consequent greater wisdom, aid him in prolonging his life on this desolate island; and then, leaving it in some way, to secure their safe arrival home at no very distant day. But "God moves in a mysterious way:" and the hopeful plans of those hours were to sink in the gloom of despair, ere the loved and far-distant home of his childhood should be reached again.

Having taken a draught from the cool spring near their place of repose, they went down to the portion of the wreck upon which they floated ashore. Here, after some search, they found a small tin can of honey. This, with their flour and water, served them for breakfast, though the honey was partaken of sparingly, as a luxury too rare to be quickly finished.

They then walked along the shore, for the double purpose of seeking shellfish for food, and of obtaining some knowledge of the place

upon which they were cast. Captain Coffin having reached a little eminence, and after gazing around discovering no traces of other human beings than themselves, mournfully exclaimed, in the familiar language of Cowper's Alexander Selkirk:

"I am monarch of all I survey,  
My right there is none to dispute;  
From the center all round to the sea,  
I am lord of the fowl and the brute."

There was no exultation in the thought of their isolation and state of sole monarchy; but a deep sense of pain and regret, no doubt, accompanied this announcement of their loneliness, and with a sigh he might have continued,

"But the sound of the church-going bell,  
These valleys and rocks never heard;  
Never sighed at the sound of a knell,  
Or smiled when a Sabbath appeared."

And often, O how often! as the shipwrecked and doubly bereaved *son* looked away over the wide ocean, in loneliness and almost in despair, might he have used the next stanza:

"Ye winds, that have made me your sport,  
Convey to this desolate shore  
Some cordial, endearing report  
Of a land I shall visit no more."

“ My friends, do they now and then send  
A wish or a thought after me ?  
O tell me I yet have a friend,  
Though a friend I am never to see ! ”

In the course of his tour Captain Coffin ere long came upon the remains of an “ Indian hut,” as they termed it, and from the bleached appearance of the shells strewn around, they concluded it had long been uninhabited. Entering the dilapidated doorway, they were startled by the sight of a skeleton. Their first thought was, that those bones might have been the remains of some poor sailor, shipwrecked like themselves, who, finding himself unable to obtain sufficient food in this desolate spot to sustain life, had dragged out a miserable existence here, and at last died of famine in his lonely hut. But on examining more closely the structure of the head, Captain Coffin came to the conclusion that it was the skeleton of an Indian, or South American native, as the skull was small, and the forehead exceedingly low. This idea was more acceptable than that which first presented itself; yet the conviction that it was possible they might never leave that place would cling to them, and with a sad heart

Captain Coffin said to his son, "Thomas, perhaps we may also lie here unburied." There was a prophecy in his words, so far as they regarded himself, though, like many a man who foretells future events, he did not realize it.

Having obtained a few shellfish to vary their diet, and discovered during their excursion that they were upon a small island, they spent the rest of the day in building, as well as their strength would allow, a little house, in the form of a long tent, from the lumber which was constantly floating ashore from their ill-fated ship. In this little house they spent the following night, and ere they slept, thanked God for the shelter which it afforded them. On Friday morning, the third morning after their landing on the island, as they pursued their usual route along the shore in search of shellfish, they espied a barrel, which a friendly wave had cast on the shore, and on opening it, to their great joy they found it to contain shipbread. But "disappointment is the lot of man," and the bread was soon found to be so saturated with salt water as to be eaten only after long soaking; and after

they obtained a fire, by boiling, reducing it at last to a pulp, which was fresh enough to be palatable to those who had little besides to satisfy the cravings of hunger.

On the first night of their arrival Captain Coffin and his son felt the necessity of a fire, and eagerly looked in their pockets to ascertain whether the few matches which they still possessed were sufficiently dry to ignite. Not until several days after their landing did the sun shine enough to dry those matches. Meantime they ate their uncooked dough, and shivered with the cold, longing for their comfortable home, and a place near a stove of blazing anthracite. On Saturday, when the sun seemed to have dried the matches, Captain Coffin and his son set vigorously to work, hoping to secure ere the day ended that "best of servants but worst of masters," a fire. At noon, when Thomas and his father were eating their raw dough, Captain Coffin remarked that "it would answer for food very well if it were only cooked," and immediately after dinner they commenced their labor. Thomas tried to strike fire with two stones. A piece of oil cloth taken from his only shirt, was

torn into shreds, hoping that it would serve for tinder. The poor boy toiled long and hard, but not a spark would perform the deed he wished. Captain Coffin rubbed pieces of wood together as savages often do, hoping to gain a fire in that way. But though the wood smoked, he could not make it ignite. Finally, they thought it sufficiently heated to light a match. They touched one to it. The match ignited, but instantly went out. Another was tried. That would not catch at all. A third, and lo! it blazed up with a cheering light. Both the spectators were delighted. Captain Coffin himself was almost overjoyed, and this not so much because with a fire they could cook their food, and keep themselves warm and their clothing dry; but because, by means of the smoke which they might now create, some passing ship might notice the fact that human beings were inhabiting even that desolate spot; and, since such a custom is common among shipwrecked mariners, might suppose that some unhappy exiles from their native land were longing for them to pause, anchor, receive them on board, and convey them to some port from whence they might

more easily reach their far-distant homes. As a link, therefore, in the chain which bound him to his early home, Captain Coffin rejoiced in the success of their efforts. So absorbed was he in thinking of the pleasant change in their condition which the prospect of a fire afforded them that he forgot to add more fuel, and if Thomas had not been more mindful of that necessity, their precious treasure would have been lost ere they had scarce realized its possession.

Just as the fire had been sufficiently increased to cause a volume of smoke to arise, they were startled by the sound of human voices. Some human beings were evidently on their island, had seen their smoke, and were now rapidly advancing toward them. They hardly knew whether to rejoice or be alarmed. They hoped the voices were those of white men: they feared they were those of savages. "Father," exclaimed Thomas, "that sounds like a human voice!" They listened, and then proceeded themselves in the direction of the voices. How their hearts throbbed with the hope that they might meet some of their shipmates! "O Captain Coffin! Captain Coffin!" was the first



exclamation they distinguished, and from a clump of bushes came forth two well-known persons, David R. Evans, the second mate, and Robert Wells, one of the colored sailors.

The father and son greeted them with every possible demonstration of welcome. All distinctions in rank and difference in color were forgotten, and they embraced each other, remembering only their common sufferings and common hopes. All then knelt down together, and Captain Coffin offered a prayer of thanksgiving for their escape, and of entreaty for protection in whatever dangers might yet await them. Their prospect of reaching home was now certainly better, since there were more of them to labor in executing any plan which might be devised for their escape.

The second mate presented but a sorry appearance. His clothes were torn, from passing through the bushes and over the rocks. He had but one stocking left, and one shoe. The colored man was almost as badly situated. The second mate carried in his hand a speaking trumpet, and the colored man held a bag containing ship bread.

Mr. Evans, and George, as the colored man was usually called, were soon taken to the fire, and there gave some account of the manner in which they had passed their time since they were separated on the bosom of the deep, two floating on one piece of wreck in one direction, and four floating on another piece in another.

After accounting for the absence of their two colored comrades, they stated that they reached the shore of a neighboring island about noon of the same day they were wrecked, and then, ascending an eminence, watched the portion upon which floated the captain and his son. They saw them land upon the island where they were now all assembled, and resolved to reach them. They saw a large quantity of provisions in the water near the shore, but did not have forethought enough to roll it upon the beach for future use, so that much of it was carried away by the waves. They secured ship bread enough for their food, and then immediately commenced building a raft, on which they hoped to be able to reach the adjacent island, and thus meet their captain once more. They obtained, by hard labor, enough spikes from pieces of the wreck to

fasten their raft in some parts, while other parts were tied together with strips of bed-ticking, taken from the bed once belonging to the captain's wife. How little thought she, when her maiden fingers sewed up the seams of that bed-tick, (as they probably did,) that it would ever be used to lash planks together far away in the cold regions near Cape Horn, while her own form should be then sunk beneath the dreary waters, and her husband and son be cast away on their desolate shores.

While thus engaged on the raft the second mate was severely injured internally by his over-exertion, which injury resulted finally in consumption. At last the raft, and the needed paddles to propel it, were finished, and hopefully, yet fearfully, they started for the other island. The current was so strong, that instead of being able to land on that portion of the island where they saw the captain land, the raft was carried irresistibly toward the opposite side of the island, and there they finally landed. As they advanced toward the place at which they wished to land, they called aloud through their trumpet, eagerly scanning the ground in

their vicinity to discover, if possible, any traces of those whom they so anxiously sought. As they drew near the center of the island they reached an eminence, from which they could perceive that they were indeed upon an island, for the blue waves were to be seen in all directions, and hope revived in their hearts as they thought it still more probable that their shipmates were near them, since they could not easily leave the spot where Providence had thrown them in the hour of their preservation from the perils of shipwreck. So the two went on, calling aloud and listening for a reply. Suddenly they descried a faint smoke. It increased. They were sure it was no mist, but the smoke from a fire recently kindled, as they had not seen it before, though they had often looked in that direction. It was indeed, as we have stated, from the newly obtained fire over which the captain and his son were rejoicing. The second mate and colored man hastened on, still shouting. The joyous result we know, and cannot wonder that in such an hour a solemn thanksgiving should have been offered to Him who had preserved them so wonderfully to meet again.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE LONELY GRAVE.

Go, stranger! track the deep;  
Free, free the white sail spread!  
Wave may not foam nor wild wind sweep,  
Where rest not England's dead.—MRS. HEMANS.

AFTER resting a short time the whole party proceeded to find the raft and secure it, so that, if deemed best, they might seek a refuge in the island from which it came, where, probably, more provisions could be secured. Upon this raft they could all pass over in safety, and if not all at one time, certainly sooner than if they had none built. What was their disappointment to find, on arriving at the landing place, that the raft was utterly gone! Its builders had very carelessly neglected to secure it, and it had floated far out of sight. If it had only been secured the shipwrecked mariners might have reached the other island sooner, then have constructed their boat sooner, and

finally have succeeded in escaping. But the ways of Providence are mysterious, and doubtless some wise and good end will eternity reveal as the result of that seemingly to be regretted circumstance.

The Sunday following this meeting of old comrades, Captain Coffin was taken ill very suddenly with some disease of the heart. He had been without appetite for some time, the natural result of the mental depression occasioned by his bereavement, even if no physical derangement had been known. Now he was so prostrated that he was not expected to live from hour to hour. On attempting to sit up, he would faint. On one of these occasions he swooned so deeply that his son could not forbear exclaiming, with bitter anguish, "Father's dead! father's dead!" His companions soothed him, and soon his father revived. But so faint was the captain's hope of the prolongation of his life till he could reach the other island, that he requested his shipmates to bury his remains on a hill near their house, placing a board over his grave; and then bade his son "put his trust in the Almighty, for Mr. Evans, the second mate,

would do all he could to secure their return to their far-distant homes." And often, while thus prostrated by illness, the feeble voice of the sick and sorrowing captain might have been heard praying for divine aid and strength.

As soon as Captain Coffin was somewhat recovered the men commenced building a boat in which to reach the adjacent island. The occupation of the captain's son at this time was that of securing, at the proper time of the tide, all the muscles and limpets which could be found, and also to keep the fire burning, over which hung a pot which they had fortunately secured, and in which they placed the bread which had been damaged by salt water, and boiled it till somewhat fresher, and of pudding like consistency. This kind of food, unpalatable as it would seem to an epicure, was gratefully accepted by the hungry mariners, and served in some sort to sustain their lives.

As an example of their indomitable perseverance and courage under difficulties, may be mentioned the fact that their implements for constructing their boat were two jack-knives! They tied the planks together, and filled the

seams with such portions of their dress as they could spare for such a purpose. It must not be supposed that their boat was carved and proportioned with artistic skill, or that it bore much resemblance to boats that are launched from the shop of an experienced boatbuilder. It was as rude as an Indian's bark canoe, and but little, if any, safer. Yet it seemed sufficient to convey them to the other island; and however unworthy of the name of "boat," they gladly dubbed it such, in consideration of the good service the nondescript craft might yet render them. The barge was not long in constructing, for on the 2d of September they found her ready for use, and on that day Captain Coffin and the colored man started for the other island, leaving the second mate and Thomas together.

It may be wondered that these shipwrecked seamen should be able to note the day of the month on which they accomplished anything, or that they should know when the holy day of rest arrived, since they had neither almanac nor instrument for taking such note of time. The secret lay in their adopting the simple method used by Indians of many tribes, and by ex-



iled mariners from time immemorial, namely, a notched stick, which was placed first in the charge of the captain, and afterward in his son's hands, till it was accidentally lost, as we shall see in the sequel.

To return to the boat. It had two pieces of plank, fastened on each side somewhat like the "outriggers" used by the natives of the Pacific islands, and presented a singular appearance to the captain's son as he stood on the shore and watched them, while the frail bark rose and fell upon those cold, cheerless waves. At last he remembered his particular province, and left off gazing after them, to repair to the rude kitchen and enter upon the preparation of dinner. The simple repast was soon ready, and then the anxious, half-orphan son stood again watching for the return of the boat. At two o'clock the boat came in sight. The colored man alone was in it. Anxious for the safety of his only surviving parent, the young lad called aloud as soon as George came within hailing distance, "Is father safe?" and he, misunderstanding the question, answered "No." What a moment of suspense was that to the young man, who had already

seen more sorrow than commonly falls to the lot of those whose summers are scarcely sixteen in number! He repeated his question almost frantically, but was soon reassured by the announcement that he was left, at his own request, upon the other island, and had sent George to bring his son over to him, that the long night of that region need not find them separated.

The second mate was suffering from a slight indisposition consequent upon his exposures, when Thomas bade him "good-by," and joyfully went to meet his father.

Ever since they had obtained a fire, it was their constant effort to retain it, and for this purpose at night they would pile up branches of the trees around ere they retired, and often rise during the night to replenish it. Now, on crossing to the other island, it was deemed advisable to carry some fire with them, and accordingly Thomas took a long stick, the end of which was burning, in his hand.

Just about dark the little boat shot into the little cove, and rested at a convenient landing place. Thomas and his colored companion leaped on shore, and hastened up to the hut

which had been constructed by the second mate and colored man during their brief sojourn on the island. As they drew near, Thomas, in his eagerness to meet his father, and with the elastic step of youth, a little in the advance, they heard a low, murmuring sound, and instinctively paused. From that humble tenement, so rude as to be scarcely worthy of the name, was heard ascending the solemn voice of prayer. The bereaved husband was asking for strength to bear meekly his burden of sorrow; the disappointed captain was imploring greater riches than those which he had hoped to gain on this voyage; the anxious father was pleading for the safe arrival of his precious boy, and the all-protecting care of God for the far-distant ones whom he loved.

In a few moments the prayer ceased, and the two newly arrived ones entered and greeted their leader. Outside, upon an eminence, Thomas saw that a staff was reared, and a rude signal flying in the evening breeze. It had been placed there by Mr. Evans and George, in the vain hope that some passing ship might desery it, and, pitying their exile, might convey them to the land of their birth.

On the following morning George started for the other island, in order to convey the second mate to the island, which it was determined should be their home for the present.

During his absence, Captain Coffin and his son went over to another part of the island where many things were coming ashore from the wreck, and there, from the ample store of material which their ship's cargo furnished to them, they built another hut. When this employment was over, the two, who in their exile and bereavement were "all the world" to each other, climbed the high rocks, to obtain a better view of the island, and also to see what things the ocean had borne to the land beyond the rocky barrier to which they had come. Here they soon discovered a barrel of bread, and, to their satisfaction, found it to be uninjured by the salt water. This very barrel had been round Cape Horn before, and was not much improved by its long voyages, but was yet heartily welcome and thankfully received. They ate of it with delight, and then placing some of it in a cloth which they had brought for the purpose, they clambered over the rough, rocky

path again, and conveyed it to their newly erected house.

The colored man, finding the wind contrary and the seas high, returned without having obtained the second mate, and the captain then accompanied him in the boat to the little cove where the barrel of bread was, and there hastily constructed another hut in which to store provisions. Meanwhile Thomas kept the fire, and sought for limpets to vary their diet, and add to their stock of edibles. Their little hut here had a rough floor and berths around the sides, while in an appropriate place very near was the "large roaring fire" which was the especial charge of the youngest of the party.

The shore in this vicinity was strown with lumber; some in large planks, but most of it in pieces of smaller sizes—some not more than three inches in length. The sharp rocks of this inhospitable coast had broken the lumber, as the wild waves dashed it in fury against them.

On Saturday the colored man succeeded in obtaining the second mate, and landed him in safety on the island with his companions, from whom he had been obliged to bear a lonely sep-

aration. He often spoke of the nights which he spent on the island alone as among the most dreary of his life. In the daytime they could see the smoke from each other's fires, and this token of the vicinage of human beings was somewhat cheering.

After the arrival of the second mate the boat was again in requisition to bring bread from the place where the barrel was stored. It was exceedingly difficult to bring it to their house by land, as the rocks over which they must pass were very steep and rough, and the whole road full of precipices and chasms, where the safety of life and limb was only secured by vigilance and activity.

Their next great effort was to commence a small vessel, or larger boat, in which they might start out to sea, with a reasonable expectation of reaching some more frequented part of the world, where some ship might pause on her voyage, and enable them to secure their escape. The planks and other timber needed for their new craft were selected from the lumber strewing the shore on the other side of the rocks. Their method of bringing them to the

place selected as the best for building the vessel, was to tie a rope, which they fortunately possessed, to the planks, and as they were too heavy to drag upon the land, even if the path had been smooth, they were allowed to float in the water, which was there sufficiently quiet, while those who had the rope in their hands walked along sometimes on the shore and sometimes in the shallow water. With great difficulty and severe toil did these sad mariners labor while constructing their frail vessel; but the toil was easy, the labor sweet, from the happy thought accompanying every exertion, "we are doing something to assist us in getting home again."

Meanwhile George and Thomas were frequently the purveyors of the shipwrecked party. They sought along the shore, and in the wave-washed crevices of the rocks, the little shell-fish which God seemed to have placed there for their sustenance. They also tried to capture some members of the finny and scaly tribe, but in vain. With the hope of success they placed an iron staple, which they found among their few remaining possessions, in the fire, and

sought to bend it into a desirable shape to use as a fish-hook. They then untwisted a portion of their rope for a line, but not a single specimen of the piscatory family gladdened their eyes and rewarded their efforts. There were evidently no fishes in that immediate vicinity.

At the time the "Manchester" was lost spring was just advancing upon these islands, and here it may be proper to mention that the ship was wrecked on the coast of Terra del Fuego, or "Land of Fire;" but in their travels during their sad sojourn in that inhospitable region the survivors were enabled to discover that instead of being all one large island, as sometimes represented on our maps, Terra del Fuego is partly a cluster of small islands, with channels or passages of water between them from one to five miles in width.\* The climate is chilly, and the whole aspect of these islands rather dreary. The marks of volcanic eruptions are also here to be seen in the rent rocks, and in their peculiar composition. Snow-storms are here known during the entire year, so that summer cannot properly be said ever to reign in this locality.

\* See chapter xii.



Just at this period, while the healthiest of the party were vigorously engaged in constructing their vessel, a cloud was gathering above them all in the illness of one of their number. The second mate, Mr. Evans, was gradually failing in health, and was unable to render much assistance in their shipbuilding. He could sometimes go down to the shore, and engage in vain attempts to catch some fish, as that required but little strength. And he was sometimes busied in keeping the fire which was so valuable to them. But no hard labor could he perform, and he was fast becoming a burden to the little company of his fellow-survivors, who must supply his wants as well as their own, and be engaged in attending to their sick comrade, when they might otherwise be engaged in their preparations for escape from exile. Yet they murmured not at this. His life was precious to them in their involuntary exile, and they would gladly have had him spared that he might still be able to converse with them, and at last, perhaps, be with them restored to his friends at his early home. The cup of cold water was freely given to cool his parched lips, and the

refreshing fluid never withheld when wanted to cool his fevered brow, or a friendly hand refused when needed to render any service to make him more comfortable. He bore his wearisome illness with as much patience as could be expected of one suffering so intensely, and with so few of the common comforts and necessaries of life.

On the third of November he suffered unusually. At times it seemed as if the moment of dissolution must soon arrive. Yet he still had hope of surviving the disease. He was suffering from "quick consumption;" and it is well known that the sufferers from that disease are often flattered by its delusive changes and phases into the belief that they will speedily recover; and so, while the sands in his hourglass were almost run, he was vainly imagining that he had many years to live.

In the forenoon of the above-mentioned day Mr. Evans talked much of Nantucket, and the friends he had on that island; asked when the captain thought the boat would be done, and how soon he might reasonably expect to meet his friends again. The rest of the shipwrecked

band had no idea that the second mate could live to go away in the boat, and at last, on this forenoon, Captain Coffin felt it his duty to tell the sick man that he was evidently fast hastening to "that bourne whence no traveler returns." Mr. Evans bore the reception of such a communication as heroically as could be expected, and requested Captain Coffin to write down a few last messages to convey to his friends in case he should not live to converse with them again. The captain very promptly acceded to his request, and set about preparing materials for use on this solemn occasion. It may be wondered how any paper or pens could be obtained in that land, so far removed from the stationery shops of the civilized world. But for pencil or pen Captain Coffin used a small stick, whose sharpened end had been burned so that it would make a black, ill-defined mark. It was all the pen they could obtain, and they were very glad to possess even that. "What can be obtained on which to write?" was the next question. A piece of smooth plank, if such could be found, might answer; but they had a better substitute than that, yet one that gave

many a pang to that father's heart, as he wrote upon it. Strange as it may seem, the last kind farewell messages of that dying man were penciled by the captain on the blank portion of his own far-off daughter's writing book, or "copy-book," as some call it, which she had commenced using in the village school at her island-home, and which was accidentally packed with her mother's articles, and at the breaking up of the ship, and the scattering of all the treasures on board, this had floated unharmed ashore, and was now dry and fit for use.

As he looked upon his beloved daughter's name written upon the title-page, and saw her youthful and familiar chirography, the heart of the strong man melted within him as he yearned to see that daughter's face again, and remembered she was now motherless; and the tears would come as he said to his son, who shared largely in his father's emotions, "This is all we have which was Louisa's."

After taking down his farewell words, the captain, with the others, did all they could for the comfort of the sick man till toward six o'clock, when they all sought to retire for the

night to their rough, hard couches. With his own hand the captain smoothed the only two pillows which had floated on shore, placing them as comfortably as possible beneath the sick man's head, and then, after a season of solemn prayer, in which the dying man was commended to the infinite mercy of God in Christ, they all prepared for their night's rest. As the nights were short at this season of the year in this latitude, they usually retired at sundown. It was not quite six as they prepared for that sleep which was to them so welcome since it brought forgetfulness of their sorrows, and permitted them, in dreams, to revel amid the joys of home. To the far-off mariner how precious are such visions of the night!

Captain Coffin and Thomas had retired to their berths, but the colored man was still up, moving quietly about the little room, and humming the tune of some familiar hymn. A board had been placed in front of the sick man's bed, to serve as a screen from the light and heat of the fire, and its shadow prevented the others in the room from noticing the appearance of the dying man. But as the colored man passed

near him he noticed suddenly that there was a marked change in his appearance. "Captain Coffin!" exclaimed he hastily, and at his sudden exclamation both Thomas and his father arose.

"What is it?" asked the captain, with some alarm at the unusual tone of his colored companion.

"He's gone!" was the reply, and the captain sprang from his berth and approached that of the second mate. He could discover no signs of life, and reverently closed the eyes of his only fellow-officer who had survived the shipwreck, but who would never reach the green hills of his childhood in that far-off Wales where his parents still dwelt. The dust of a Briton must henceforth hallow this little island, and his would probably be a lonely grave. So the captain thought as he looked forward that night to a return to the civilized world, little dreaming that while the grave of Mr. Evans might be the only one on the island, some of the rest of them might leave their cold remains unburied upon that inhospitable soil.

With the assistance of his companions, Cap-

tain Coffin composed the stiffening limbs of the deceased upon a board, covered the body with a portion of his bedding, and when all was done to prepare the lifeless form for burial on the morrow, the survivors knelt again in prayer.

The scene, the hour, the circumstances were inexpressibly solemn. Never while memory remains will that young lad, who knelt there by his father's side, forget them. It was the first time he had ever been so closely in contact with death on shore, and the whole occasion was such as to stamp itself indelibly upon his mind. His nerves were stretched to their utmost tension, so to speak, as he lay there with his father, and kept much awake during the long and lonely night. He could not bear to be separated for a moment from his father, nor could that father desire him to be away from his side. Both realized sadly how far, very far, they were from their home and surviving loved ones.

But the longest night has at last an end. The gray morning at length appeared. As soon as it was practicable, the three survivors went out

to a little hill near, and there excavated a spot to contain the last remains of their departed companion. They were obliged to dig the grave with a paddle, having no more suitable instrument. Placing a board at the bottom of the excavation, and others at the head, foot, and sides, they returned to their little hut, and prepared to remove the cold remains to their last earthly resting-place.

The site of the grave was chosen upon the hill because it would thus be more likely to be discovered by those who should visit the island in future years. But it was a difficult matter to convey the body to its last retreat. They were obliged to tie it to the board upon which it had been stretched, and then placing another board on the ground when they reached the slope of the hill, to slide it on that until it reached the appointed spot. The rain had commenced descending, yet they continued their solemn duties to the dead with all the propriety and decorum which circumstances would allow. They lowered his body into the grave, placed another board over it, and then filled in the earth, and heaped up the lonely mound. As



they stood beside it, and realized that they had taken their farewell look at the familiar form of their companion, the tears of regret at his loss from their little company, and of sympathy with his far-off relatives when they should learn his fate, coursed down their cheeks. In solemn words the captain approached the mercy-seat, to ask that to those who were left, this afflictive dispensation might be made a blessing. There too, by that new-made grave, they sought to realize that

“Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul.”

The unpleasant weather obliged them to return to their hut as soon as the last sad rites were performed, and alone upon the hill-top, with that “cold November rain” beating down upon his grave, they left their late companion. But, thank God! mourning friends leave only the *bodies* of those they loved in the tomb; the spirit is no longer encased in its clay tenement.

Soon after the interment of the second mate's body, Captain Coffin placed a barrel-stave at the head of the grave, and a smaller piece of board at the foot. By the side of it was set

upright a board, having carved, in rude but almost ineffaceable letters, upon it,

“DAVID R. EVANS, OF WALES.

Sailed from New York in ship Manchester, of Nantucket. Came ashore on a piece of wreck 29th August, 1854, and died here November 2, 1854, aged — years.”\*

A large piece of joist was then reared on the brow of the hill, with the hope that some passing voyager might see it, be induced to stop and examine it, and then carry the tidings of the loss of the ship, and the death of the second mate, to that far-off island in the Atlantic, where so many waiting hearts were longing for some tidings of the missing vessel. So, too, the news of Mr. Evans's death might be borne to his early home, that the mother who cradled him in her bosom, and the father who watched over his childhood, might often think of that far southern island and his lonely grave.

\* Master Coffin did not remember his age.

## CHAPTER V.

## SAVAGE TRIUMPH.

Blest are they  
That earth to earth intrust, for they may know,  
And tend the dwelling whence the slumberer's clay  
Shall rise at last, and bid the young flowers bloom  
That waft a breath of hope around the tomb,  
And kneel upon the mossy turf and pray.

MRS. HEMANS.

TIME passed on with rapid strides, and but few events marked its progress after the second mate's death till the 21st day of November, 1854, which day will also ever be marked with black in the calendar of the orphan boy, from whose lips this narrative is written.

He went on that day with the colored man to the other side of the island, on some errand for their general benefit. They walked along the seashore toward a promontory which forbade a further view in that direction. They reached the point of land, turned it, and lo, unwelcome sight! there was a canoe containing natives in

full view. Thomas called to the colored man to run, for the first impulse was to escape, fearing to fall into the hands of merciless and cruel savages. The natives seemed to be just landing from their canoe, but George and Thomas did not stop to watch their motions. Throwing everything down upon the shore, they rushed toward the bushes and scrambled through them. The colored man wished to stop in the bushes ; but Thomas, fearing that they might be discovered in a hiding-place so insecure, urged him to continue his flight. They soon came to a hill whose brow was so bare that they greatly feared discovery should they attempt to cross it. Yet there seemed to be no better course, and by dint of crawling on their hands and knees, lying, serpent-like, as near the ground as possible, they at last gained the other side. Glancing at the natives, they saw them still huddled together in their canoe, barcheaded, and apparently not very well clad.

Hastening on, they at last reached the little hill near their hut, out of breath, and perspiring freely on account of their vigorous exertions. Both, however, found strength enough to cry

aloud, "Captain Coffin!" "Captain Coffin!"  
"Father! father!"

"What is it?" hastily inquired the captain, alarmed by their cries.

"The Indians! the Indians!" shouted Thomas Edward, for his young imagination, often fired by the accounts he had read, of the cruel treatment and inhuman barbarity sometimes experienced by our forefathers at the hands of the aborigines of America, now connected the remembrance of their deeds and name with the dark-browed children of Terra del Fuego, of whom he had obtained a glimpse, and who, for aught he knew, might be cannibals of the direst malignity.

Captain Coffin received the intelligence calmly. He had been expecting some such discovery during all their stay on this island, and therefore when the unwelcome tidings came he heard it with great composure.

"Let us go into the house and pray," was his suggestion, and the others followed him to the inside of their little shanty. There they knelt in humble prayer before God, and the captain offered a petition which could not but be urgent

and sincere. He well knew that they possessed nothing with which to bribe the natives to treat them kindly, and that the little which they did possess would but excite their cupidity without satisfying it. He knew also that God had the power to influence their hearts, for "the hearts of all men are in his hand," and to him as a stronger tower of refuge and defense he fled on this occasion.

Rising from their knees somewhat resigned to the will of God, the little company held a consultation in order to decide whether it would be best to go and meet the natives, or to remain where they were and await the dispensations of Providence. Their first act then was to take down their flag-staff from the hill, lest the natives should see it, and be attracted to their abode by it. They waited about an hour, and then suspense could no longer be borne. They wished to know whether they were still sole occupants of the island or not, and Thomas, with the colored man, returned far enough toward the natives to discern that they had re-embarked, and that their little canoe was far out on the ocean, a black speck upon the blue waters.

Feeling assured that they were once more freed from the presence of enemies, their next plan was to proceed to the little cove where the natives landed, and which was the one in which they themselves first landed, and see if they had taken away their lumber, etc., which had been left there. They missed but one paddle, and concluded that either the covetous propensity of these natives was not very great, or that they designed to return at some future period better prepared to appropriate more to their own use. It was therefore deemed wisest to proceed at once, and as fast as possible, to the completion of their little vessel, that they might hasten away before their return. The captain himself prepared the mast, oars, and thole-pins. That very day they finished their craft, and prepared for an early start in the morning.

The island which was their abiding place is so far south, that at certain seasons of the year the days are very long. Dawn appears very soon after midnight, and the day is ushered in by the southern sun long before he gilds the tops of the Rocky Mountains, or the spires of

New England. It was about three o'clock on the morning of the next day that the little company departed from the island. Day soon after commenced, but the weather was not very clear. Previous to embarking Captain Coffin offered prayer for the last time, as they all hoped, in their little hut, for whose shelter they felt very grateful.

Soon after leaving the island it was discovered that their little vessel leaked. Thomas was therefore stationed in the bottom of the boat to bail, as well as he could with the poor utensil he could command, and thus they hoped to keep her free. Meanwhile the captain and George pulled toward the island near which the ship struck, and where a large portion of her was still remaining. What must have been that captain's emotions as he proceeded toward the scene of his shipwreck, and expected to see in the wreck mementoes of the dear wife he could never meet again on earth! But God, the All-Merciful, forbade such a renewal of his grief; and ere he could again stand upon a piece of his ship which sailed so proudly out of New York harbor, he permitted him a meeting with the



departed loved one in the New Jerusalem. But again we are anticipating.

When they were about half way to the island the wind, which was ahead, blew harder, rising almost to a gale. The clouds thickened and gathered blackness above them. By and by, with sudden force, the wind struck their little boat, the water foamed about them, and the thick, fast-falling flakes of snow almost blinded them. The fire, which they had placed in a little tub, hoping to convey it safely, went out. To the leeward was a rock, and the water dashing with white tossing spray against it. Apparently the elements were combined against them, and the Storm-King forbade their progress. Again they held a consultation as to the safest method of procedure. It was decided to return, and soon again they set foot upon the island they had so lately left. They drew the boat to shore, took out their bread, made a fire in the shelter of a rock, and looked for shellfish. The snow had ceased to fall, and the wind grew less. They knew not the exact time, for they had no timepiece that was not spoiled. But, as near as could be judged, it was about six o'clock in the

morning when the colored man went up to their house, the captain remaining on the beach, and Thomas standing near the fire. Suddenly Thomas heard a noise like that of one scrambling upon rocks. He looked in the direction from whence the sound proceeded, and heard at the same time several loud grunts,—“ugh ! ugh !” like the noises of a pig. One look sufficed to show him that the natives had discovered them, and were hurrying toward them.

These natives presented a rather grotesque appearance, but were fair specimens of their race. The only dress which they wore was a sort of upper dress thrown over their shoulders, in shape somewhat like a lady's cape, only longer, and was composed of sealskins. The dress of both male and female was very similar in appearance, and both allowed the hair to hang down over the forehead, cut across just above the eyes. They were all very filthy looking, and the odor proceeding from their vermin-covered bodies, and excessively soiled clothing, was far from acceptable to the olfactories of the more cleanly whites.

Thomas felt impelled to run when he first

heard the noise; but a moment's reflection showed him it would be in vain, and might be worse in the end for them, so he advanced bravely toward the approaching savages and met them with an outstretched hand. Rather an insincere welcome truly! but he thought it his duty to conciliate these barbarians, and a man will not only *give* but *do* almost anything to save his life.

The women so nearly resembled the men in their appearance that it was with difficulty Thomas could distinguish the sexes. The men had no hair upon their faces, nor did he see any thus adorned during all the time he was with these natives. Once he met with a man who had, as he termed it, "grizzly whiskers," but he belonged to another tribe.

As Thomas advanced to "shake hands" with the natives they drew back, and seemed rather afraid of him. This was evidently because they thought the white men and their colored companion possessed firearms, of which they seemed to have some knowledge.

One woman finally had courage to advance toward Thomas, being encouraged by his mimicry

of some of their grotesque actions. She laughed at his motions, and immediately commenced taking hold of and examining him. The others soon followed her example. Thomas thought of the adventures of Captain Riley among the Arabs, about which he had read at his far-distant home, little thinking he should ever experience the same. One of the natives took his hat from his head, but he jumped after it, and the native gave it up to him. They often repeated a word which sounded to Thomas, as near as he can remember, like "piccalilly." It did not seem from this expression that those who spoke the English language could hold any conversation with them; but by and by one of them asked for water, saying distinctly, "water! water!"

"Ah! talk English, can you?" exclaimed Thomas, and then handed them the sparkling fluid. To use his own expression when narrating the circumstance, "they sucked it up like little pigs."

After this several of them kept saying "ship, ship," apparently asking where the ship was in which the white men had reached the island.

Thomas made signs that the ship was wrecked a long distance from them; and the captain then invited them into the house, hoping to conciliate them, and get them away peacefully, intending to escape from their vicinity as soon as possible. He then gave them some of his biscuit, which they greedily ate. They had apparently been hunting for shellfish to appease their savage appetite, for they held in their hands some sticks which they were accustomed to use for the purpose of knocking them off the rocks.

While sitting in the hut one of the natives, an old gray-haired man, seemed to take a particular fancy to Captain Coffin, and manifested his regard by sitting near him, smoothing the captain's hair, and parting it in a manner pleasing to savage taste.

The captain was suspicious of his extreme friendliness, and said aside, to his son and George, "Keep an eye on that old man."

In a short time one of the natives evinced a determination to take away their boat-sail; but this the captain could not allow, and desired him to desist. Meanwhile one native had seized a bolt and stood behind the captain with it in

his hand. Discovering this, the captain thought it prudent to go out into the open air, and made signs to the natives that he had no more to give. They appeared to receive the intelligence peaceably, and began to go away. One of them asked Thomas, by signs, if they had any firearms. He believing it to be necessary to intimidate them answered "yes," although, in truth, they had none, or indeed scarcely any weapon of defense. At last the natives moved away, and seemed as if they would depart and leave the civilized trio once more in peace. They reached the top of the hill and then paused. In a few minutes one returned, apparently as errand boy for the rest, and demanded the clothing which the shipwrecked mariners wore, saying in English, "Shirt! shirt!"

The captain remonstrated, saying they would freeze without clothing; for in that country, in the inclement weather which often prevailed, such would surely be the case.

The eyes of the native flashed with indignation. Captain Coffin saw it, and exclaimed, "Get me a bolt! they are treacherous!" He received one, and said to the others, "Defend

yourselves." The other natives were by this time gathered around. One of them twisted the bolt out of Captain Coffin's hands, and with another native jumped on him, pressing him almost to the earth, and he walked several steps over the rocks and stones with these natives upon him. Those who remember Captain Coffin as a stout, strong man when he left Nantucket, may wonder that he could not overpower some of his enemies; but it should be remembered that he was now worn by illness and sorrow, and that he was attacked by several natives at once, whose savage ferocity added to their uncommon strength.

It was the same old native who seemed so fond of the captain that now appeared his implacable enemy. Thomas, seeing his father thus beset, struck at one of the natives with a pole, which caused him to leave Captain Coffin and run after Thomas, but he soon wearied of the pursuit, for the lad was young and active. Meanwhile the colored man with his bolt had knocked two of the natives to the earth. Had Captain Coffin only done the same when their looks warned him of treachery he might have had the

mastery over them ; but he was broken in constitution and in spirit, and would not use his weapon save in the extremest necessity for self-defense.

Before Thomas could again reach his father, the same old savage who had manifested so much regard for him in the house now showed his real enmity, for he contended with the captain, who defended himself "at fearful odds," till suddenly the bolt of the savage descended with demon energy, and the captain fell, a deep gash being cut by the bolt over one eye, leaving that eye lying on the cheek, and a portion of the brain oozing out of the orifice. At this sight Thomas became almost frantic with grief. Forgetting the danger which might accrue to himself, he rushed to his father's side, and tried to carry him to the boat, which was not far distant, but his strength was insufficient. The natives now ran for their spears, which had been left on the hill. One man about this time knocked the colored man on the head with a club. With all the earnestness which a loving son might be expected to feel at such a time, Thomas cried out, "George, take hold !" But







Escaping from the Savages.

instead of coming to his aid in lifting the body of that dear father, the colored man began to beg of the returning natives for life.

“Take us,” cried he, “but don’t kill us.”

“Jump into the boat,” shouted Thomas, who saw with more than boyish foresight that they must speedily escape or not at all. As he spoke he pushed the boat off with unnatural strength, furnished, doubtless, under Providence, by the excitement of the occasion. The colored man succeeded in reaching the boat, but they had scarcely shoved from the shore when George fell overboard. He swam along, however, for a while by the side of the boat. The natives had now run down to the shore, and just at that moment Thomas perceived that the painter was still lying on the rocks, although not fastened. As the boat moved up, the rope was drawn along on the rocks, and the natives espying it, hurried to catch hold of it; thus hoping to secure the boat and the two human beings to whom it was now an ark of safety.

The colored man, however, was able to haul it in fast enough, so that, just as the natives were near enough to seize it the next moment, the

end dropped into the water. A spear was thrown by *a woman* during the confusion, which broke in Thomas's jacket sleeve. One man with two spears in his hand darted nimbly up the rocks along the shore till he stood near the boat and above it, then hurled a rock down into the boat, where it broke without doing any damage. He then picked up large pieces of the rocks and threw at them. One of these stones struck Thomas on the head, and made a gash, from which the blood flowed profusely, and the mark of which he will bear with him to the grave. Meantime the boat had got down into the bay, and the colored man was then able to get on board.

They were now out of reach of their savage enemies, but anxiety to know the further fate of his dear father forbade Thomas to go away in the boat at present. Yet their own safety seemed to demand it, as the savages might take their own canoe and come after them. They, therefore, took each an oar and rowed away. In rowing they sat with their faces toward the shore, and it was with inexpressible emotions of grief and anguish that the son saw the inhuman treat-

ment bestowed by those wretches on his father, then happily insensible. Thomas had left the body lying there with indescribable emotions of regret, and when he now saw the rude and cruel savages throwing stones at his prostrate father his sorrow and indignation knew no bounds. He could plainly see the body quiver convulsively when struck by the missiles from the unerring hand of those barbarians, and one cannot wonder that revenge burned with fierce emotion within his bosom. Yet he knew he was powerless to punish his father's murderers; nor could he even secure the mangled body of that dear parent from their pitiless indignities. All that he could do was to continue rowing, and suffer the unchecked tears to flow rapidly down his youthful cheeks. O, who can tell, who can imagine, the wild tumult of those waves of sorrowful emotion which swept over his bosom in that dark, terrible hour!

Never while that son lives can he forget the horrors of that dreadful day! Should he join in the gayest scenes of this world's pleasure, as the young are prone to do; should he laugh as

loudly as the merriest of his comrades, down deep in his heart will the memories rankle, which, in visions of the night, and in his thoughtful waking moments, will paint vividly to his imagination the fearful scenes of that sad and awful day. Thomas being naturally of a cheerful, hopeful nature, looking on the bright side of events, and trusting in the love and mercy of his heavenly Father, was not affected by these things so sensibly as he would have been had he possessed a desponding temperament; and it is well that Time, the great healer of wounds, brings him solace, and, at times, forgetfulness. No sympathizing person would wish all the years of his life to be imbittered by the *always* recurring memory of those horrible events.

As Thomas sat thus in the boat he remembered the awful shriek which his father uttered as he fell stunned to the ground; but he thought from the nature of the terrible wound he at first received that during the stoning he was insensible, and there was a single ray of comfort in that thought.

Thomas was now a lonely orphan boy; his

living relatives all far away, and the prospect exceedingly faint that he would ever reach them. Yet, as the narrative will show, in his subsequent captivity he realized in his own experiences what others have often found in theirs, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE ESCAPE.

The strife is o'er! The loved of years,  
 To whom our yearning hearts had grown,  
 Hath left us, with life's gath'ring fears  
 To struggle darkly and alone.—WM. H. BURLEIGH.

Ay, turn and weep, 'tis manliness  
 To be heart-broken here;  
 For the grave of earth's best nobleness  
 Is watered by a tear.—N. P. WILLIS.

WHEN they could no longer discern the form of the unfortunate captain there was no more inducement to remain in that vicinity, and therefore George and Thomas rapidly plied their oars, and soon reached the island of their destination, which was the same they attempted in vain to reach on the morning of that dreadful day.

When about half way across Thomas called the attention of his companion to a smoke which was rising from a small island which they had never before approached. They had



probably seen it, for, as was stated before, Terra del Fuego, which is usually marked on the maps as one large island, is really a cluster of islands of various sizes, and from the high ground on the one which they had recently occupied, many of the islands in this archipelago can be seen. It is possible that this smoke might have been caused by a survivor from their own shipwreck, though Thomas thinks it improbable that any but those whom he knew were safe should reach the land ; and that it is far more likely that the island was at that time the abode of some of the natives belonging to the country. Yet the hearts of many survivors would rejoice, and the fears of many be allayed, while at the same time some new discoveries might be made, should our government send thither a vessel suited to such an expedition, and rescue every captive which might there be found from the galling chains of involuntary servitude, restoring him to liberty and home.

The first act of the survivors when they reached the shore and secured their invaluable boat was to kneel down and thank God for their deliverance ; and if, with the prayers and

praises which Thomas uttered in sincerity, tears and groans were mingled as he thought of that dear murdered father, who can wonder!

The next act was to ascend a hill and obtain from thence a view of the island. - The first object which attracted their attention after reaching the brow of the hill was a part of the ill-fated "Manchester."

"There's somebody alive there!" exclaimed the colored man; "I can see some clothes hanging out."

For a moment the hopes of both were raised to the anticipation of having one or more companions in their exile, by whose aid they would sooner reach the civilized world. But their hopes were illusive, and Thomas mournfully answered, "No, it is only a sail." And so, in fact, they found it when they reached the wreck and climbed on board.

O how many reminiscences of the past did this shattered, storm-beaten hulk call up to their minds! The sight of it renewed the sad memory of the solemn scenes of the shipwreck, and the grief which that warm-hearted son had hitherto felt on account of his mother's loss was now

heightened as he remembered the cruel fate of his father. What feeling heart but must be moved to pity as it contemplates the loneliness and sorrow of that night to the orphan boy!

After searching all parts of the wreck, hoping to find articles which would be of service in prolonging their lives and aiding in their escape, they succeeded in obtaining possession of a carving-knife, a coffee-mill, some canes which the second mate had made for his friends at home, still hanging where he placed them, a monkey-jacket, a blanket which was twisted round the rail, a part of a heavy hawser, part of a lantern, with the oil contained in which they greased their jack-knives, four sail-needles, four fish-hooks, some files, and plenty of nails and iron, which they hoped to make available in case of meeting with friendly natives.

By dint of hard labor they made a new mast for the boat, the old one being at the other island, bailed her out, and put up a sail. As starvation now stared them in the face, they thought it best to go back to the island from whence they had come. Their hope of finding provisions near the wreck was extinguished, and

necessity seemed to demand a return. As the natives had not yet come after them, they now supposed that they had left the island, being satisfied with their work of destruction and their savage triumph. So, commending themselves to Providence, they went back. As the wind was fair and their sail set, they were but a short time in returning.

When they reached the little bay the wind suddenly ceased, and they were obliged to take to their oars. They looked cautiously on all sides to see if any natives were there, but seeing no signs of the barbarians they ventured nearer and nearer. Thomas thought that even after all his sufferings it was possible his dear father might be "in the land of the living." As "the drowning man will catch at a straw," so he clung to the hope till the sad reality burst upon his vision and blighted that hope forever.

"O, George, he is living!" was the hasty exclamation of the orphan, but his companion signified his incredulity. A few strokes more and the beach is touched. Thomas sprang ashore, and went up to the body of his father. Placing his hand on the captain's side he waited, hoping

the heart was still beating. But no! The sufferings of the weary-hearted captain were over. God had taken him to the land of rest. The son, still bending over the prostrate form, with tears placed his hand on his father's cheeks. They were icy cold. The rocks around were crimsoned with his blood. The eye, which was protruding, or rather suspended, as it were, upon the cheek when Thomas left him last, was gone; taken as a trophy, probably, by the savage murderers. The right eye still remained. Upon the forehead was a gash, probably caused by one of the stones which were thrown at him after he fell.

The natives had taken the pillows from the house, and stripped the clothes from the body of the murdered man, cutting his boots down to get them off, but leaving them behind.

Most gladly would that dutiful son have stayed there long enough to bury the body of his father; but from the fact that the natives had not taken everything, he feared they might not be far distant and would soon return. If discovered by those merciless wretches, their own lives might pay for their temerity in returning

thither. So they hastily took the two barrels, containing bread, on board, and started to return to Wreck Island, as they called it.

It was not till after a severe struggle that the young orphan decided to leave the unburied body of his father. He would have given money without measure, if he could have purchased one short hour only in which to bury him decently, where no cannibals or voracious birds would prey upon his remains. Few boys at his age, (only about sixteen,) are called to lose both parents under such distressing circumstances, and few could have borne their bereavement and trials with a spirit so manly and brave.

The weather being unfavorable they made but little progress toward Wreck Island; and finally, as it grew more and more stormy, were obliged to seek shelter in a little cove of the same island on which the captain's body was lying. Not daring to go on shore to sleep, they remained in the boat, and as she leaked badly were obliged to bail all night, and were a part of the time up to their knees in water. On account of the stormy weather the water would rush

into the cove with great force, carrying them along with it toward the rocks, and then, as rapidly receding, would hurl them back again, so that they were in a perilous situation through the dreary night, during which the instinct of self-preservation bade them watch, though from physical exhaustion they would gladly have sought "Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep!"

He who "holds the winds in his fist and the waters in the hollow of his hand" preserved them; and on the next morning they started for Wreck Island again. In their progress round the island on which the natives met them, they saw in one place a shore where the surf broke upon the beach, reminding them of the somewhat famous "South Shore" of their far-off home, Nantucket. But, as a general thing, the coast of that island was rocky, with occasional sheltered coves.

After considerable effort they reached Wreck Island, intending to remain there but a short time, and then proceed northward; but contrary winds and stormy weather prevented them from executing this design, and they

remained there till the last of December, living mostly on the bread they had secured from the other island, and sleeping during the dreary nights upon the wreck, having fitted up a part of it as well as they could for their accommodation. The wreck was only a portion of the forward part of the vessel.

A part of the occupation of each day was to ascend some eminence in the vicinity, and watch anxiously, fearing the approach of the natives. They could not but expect a visit from them, and they wished to be informed in season to make preparations for their safety by flight.

The weather about this time was exceedingly unsettled and unpleasant, which was probably one reason why the natives did not follow them. Adding to their discomfort, was the fact that they had no fire for three months after the captain's death.

A little adventure occurring one day served to enliven the dreary monotony of their existence, and draw away their thoughts from their sad situation. Thomas was lying upon the wreck one Sunday afternoon, (for having but little employment he was accustomed to sleep



whenever it was possible, hoping thus to forget his sorrows,) when suddenly he espied a seal upon the shore. It was a large one, and its fur would have been very acceptable in such a region to the castaways; but although they made all possible haste, the animal rushed into the water and soon disappeared. This was the only seal which they saw in that vicinity. Yet the fact that the natives were dressed in seal-skins seems to prove that they were to be found on other parts of Terra del Fuego.

It will be perceived from this reference to the day of the week that Thomas had still in his possession the notched stick used by his father to mark the flight of time.

Besides the seal, no living thing save shellfish was seen by these shipwrecked ones, except that at times a few birds about the size of ducks came into view. But this was rarely the case. Thomas saw four or five of the nests of these birds, and a few of their little ones, whose color was grayish. They had no feathers on their wings, which they used as penguins do, more to aid them in swimming than in flying. Thomas and his companion endeavored to catch these

birds, in order to add them to their scanty stock of provisions, but with very little success.

During their long tarry at Wreck Island they made one unsuccessful attempt to reach an island farther north. But it rained, and the weather was every way so unfavorable that they relinquished their attempt, and returned almost disheartened, and with their clothes entirely soaked. But even on board the wreck they were not always free from care and discomfort. In fact Thomas found his sojourn in Terra del Fuego far more uncomfortable, to say the least, than his love of adventure could desire or make acceptable. He awoke one night feeling an unusual weight of care in reference to their little boat, for he well knew that upon its safety depended their chance for life and liberty. He wakened his colored comrade and requested him to aid in securing her. George, with his characteristic indolence and want of foresight, at first demurred; but as Thomas insisted, he finally arose, and they secured it. In the morning they found the wreck in such proximity to the rocks that had they not secured the boat in time, to use Thomas' own expressive words,

“she would have been smashed,” and with her would have gone every prospect of delivery from their unhappy exile.

They were sometimes exposed to danger of life and limb while climbing the rocks in search of shellfish. On one such occasion, when George had secured a large quantity of limpets, he fell over a precipice, striking his head against the rocks, and losing his tub of shellfish in the water, into which he finally fell himself. His clothes were, of course, thoroughly saturated with the cold sea-water; but he could do no better when he reached the wreck than to take off his cold, wet clothes, wring them as dry as possible, and put them on again uncomfortable as they were.

There were at the time of the shipwreck several pieces of wood nailed on various parts of the ship upon which was painted the ship's name. These Captain Coffin caused to be taken off and thrown into the sea, with the hope that by this means, if by no other, some intelligence of the ill-fated “Manchester” might be carried to her far-off owners. They also threw over casks, hoping they also would be discovered, and tell

the tale of their shipwreck. They knew the tidings would be sad and heartrending to the loved ones at home, but still they thought that any intelligence would be better than the terrible suspense which would be felt if they were among the merely "missing vessels" over which so many, many hearts are made to mourn.

Some other ships had once evidently been lost in that vicinity, for on one of those islands they found a piece of sheathing which Captain Coffin thought must have belonged to some whaler whose voyage had sadly ended on the inhospitable coast of Terra del Fuego.

In their search for eatables on this and the other islands they found some red berries, which were not very palatable, but which, when afterward pressed by hunger, they were glad to obtain. The natives, as they learned afterward, were accustomed to call these, as well as every other edible, by a name which sounded like "galeeta."

One day George and Thomas went on an excursion to the other side of the island. It was a very pleasant day for that season of the year, though the wind was high and the sea rough,

Far off upon the blue waters Thomas thought he espied a canoe, and horror filled his soul as he thought it might be the same merciless savages who murdered his dear father, now coming to finish their work of cruelty by taking their lives also. But ere long they joyfully perceived that the black object was only a rock.

On one of these excursions they discovered the billet-head of the "Manchester," which had washed ashore. All the gilding which once adorned it was washed away, and it presented a very different appearance from that which it wore when it ornamented the bow of the gallant ship.

At last George and Thomas started for San Carlos. The night previous to their embarkation they passed as usual on board the wreck, to which also their boat was fastened. An unusually high tide floated the wreck during the night, and they awoke to find, with great astonishment, that they were already far out on the ocean. Happily, their boat being fastened to the wreck, they were relieved from the anxiety they would otherwise have felt, and the suffering they might have experienced. Thomas

now urged an immediate departure in their boat for the other island in the direction of San Carlos, and succeeded in overruling the objections offered by his more timid companion, so that they started, leaving the wreck on whose deck they once stood as it sailed proudly out of New York harbor, to float, perhaps for years, upon a stormy sea, and at last be overtaken by some ship whose crew will wonder at its origin and the fate of its former inhabitants, or to strike again upon some desolate island, and fall to pieces at last among its rocks and breakers.

On they went, rowing laboriously but hopefully. Soon they reached a small island. The colored man, leaving Thomas in charge of the boat, went up to reconnoiter. As he stayed some time Thomas became impatient and followed him; but in the mean time George returned to the boat from another direction, so that they did not meet. George was much alarmed, fearing Thomas had fallen overboard; and Thomas was equally alarmed, but kept calling to his comrade, and as he could see no trace of him he returned to the boat, still calling "George, George!" Soon the call was

joyfully heard, and the prompt answer as joyfully received. In the course of their wanderings on this island they discovered beyond it many islands, some of them only a few rods square, with the water breaking over them.

On, on they went, passing many of the little islands, pausing not even to partake of food, so great was their desire to speed far away from the land of their shipwreck and sorrow toward the land of freedom and civilization.

☞ The wind, which had been gradually rising all the morning, now blew almost a hurricane, and they were compelled to pause at one of the islands on their way. They had taken some boards in their boat for the purpose of making a tent with their sail, and having secured their boat they ensconced themselves beneath it, and partook of their simple breakfast. Although they had but one article they were not sparing of that, deeming their exertions deserved, as their appetites demanded, an extra meal, and therefore ate no less than seven biscuits apiece.

In a short time the wind calmed away somewhat, and they started again. After pulling all

the rest of the forenoon and a part of the afternoon they thought it best to stop at some island and rest. Soon they came to another small island, and rowed into one of its sheltered coves, after looking about carefully and seeing no natives. Thomas remained by the boat while the colored man again went up to make a more extended survey of the island. When he returned he brought the intelligence that he had seen near a rock the remains of a fire, and some signs of a native hut. They therefore took all the things they had previously landed back into the boat, and slept on board during the night, which passed peacefully away. Here they secured a lot of wild parsley, which was tolerably palatable to them. They remained on this island several days on account of the high winds, but saw no further traces of any natives. When at last they started again they kept along under the lee of a high bluff, frequently going ashore.

Ere long they saw a large island in the distance, and concluded to go thither. It was now, by their calculation on the notched stick, the first day of January, 1855. The return of



this anniversary, so interesting to childhood and youth, who connect gifts and good cheer with New Year's day, recalled forcibly to the mind of the orphan boy the many and sorrowful changes which had occurred to him, and to those whom he loved, since the last occurrence of New Year's, which he spent most pleasantly by the fireside of his home, with a kind father and mother to watch over him, and add to his enjoyment by every means in their power. Now that dear mother's form had found a watery grave, and the bones of that well-beloved father were bleaching on the rocks of Terra del Fuego, while the son was a wanderer, sad and suffering, in a far-off inhospitable region.

Thus were exemplified in the career of this young man some of the changes and uncertainties of life. Happy will it be for him if all these vicissitudes, and the sorrows they brought to him, prove a salutary discipline to his young heart, and teach him, as such experiences are designed to teach, the folly of clinging to the transitory joys of this life, and the wisdom of seeking that which is heavenly and eternal.

## CHAPTER VII.

## ADVENTURES.

O mortals, short of sight, who think the past  
O'erblown misfortune still shall prove the last:

Alas! misfortunes travel in a train,  
And oft in life form one perpetual chain;  
Fear buries fear, and ills on ills attend,  
Till life and sorrow meet one common end.—YOUNG.

I travel all the irksome night  
By ways to me unknown.—MONTGOMERY.

ON the 2d of January, 1855, before the day had fairly dawned, Thomas and his comrade started in their little boat for the large island they had seen in the distance. A fine, fair breeze filled their sail, and they moved rapidly on, sailing most of the day, and finally anchoring at an other island between them and the larger one. The next morning the sun arose in brightness, and the weather was clear and pleasant. They again set sail. They had two sails on their boat, a foresail and mainsail, and these they set "wing and wing," to take the utmost advantage

of the favoring breeze. Through the day, as nothing was to be done by him who was not steering, Thomas made an oilcloth cap out of the remnant of some overalls which they possessed. His implements were a knife and some ropeyarn. They at last reached the large island, but deeming it best to improve the favorable weather they did not stop. It became calm after passing that island, but still they rowed on. During the night, as it was so calm, they allowed the boat to drift slowly on with the current, and so took by turns their needed repose. Once, while looking out over the waters, as the stars were shining above them, Thomas caught sight of a different light, apparently on some shore, and, he conjectured, carried by natives. His mind immediately reverted to the light mentioned as seen by Columbus; but it was with no similar feelings of joy that he descried it, for he had seen good cause to distrust and fear the natives who might be the bearers of the light, and he possessed very little with which to defend himself from their violence.

After passing this light nothing particular occurred to increase their fears of meeting the

natives again, till all at once, as the colored man was sleeping, he was suddenly aroused by Thomas, who was watching, and exclaimed, "Here's an Indian moccasin!" Any token of the proximity of natives was very unpleasant, and both looked anxiously to see if it really was a moccasin. Just then Thomas lifted his hand to his head, and lo! the oilcloth cap was gone. This explained the mystery, and all was quiet again. It was quite a relief to their excited fears to know that the startling incident had an origin so harmless.

During the most of that night Thomas was awake. It was scarcely dark at all, for they were so far south that at this season of the year the sun just stepped below the horizon as it were and then rose again. Toward morning they perceived that their boat was drifting toward the island where they had discovered the light; and as they did not desire to rush knowingly into the hands of the natives, they set their sails and ran rapidly by the island. But very soon a thick sea fog gathered close about them, and they felt obliged to anchor near one of the islands which were all around them, for

they were still in the archipelago of Terra del Fuego.

Here they remained two days, and on the last day of their sojourn here they ate the last morsel of shipbread which they possessed. With a knife they even scraped out the crumbs of biscuit which remained in the crevices of the cask ; and though some of those crumbs were mouldy, they were all eaten with a wish that yet more, even though no better than these, were left to them.

The next day the waves rolled in heavily upon the shore of the little island where they were anchored, and as this was a sign of a storm they decided not to go on at present. So they sought for a bay in which their invaluable boat might be secure. In a little cove they found some shellfish, which, however, though gladly welcomed by them as something to sustain life, seemed to produce an unhappy effect on Thomas, who was rendered quite ill from eating them. The colored man found a quantity of small edible roots, and upon the armful which he secured they lived for a time. The next day they went round to another bay,

hoping to find something there which would be fit to eat. But the storm came in all its fury, and they had for their sustenance only these unpalatable roots, some of which were very bitter.

At the entrance of the bay was a small island. They went thither and landed, thinking they might from thence more easily perceive the approach of the natives should they appear, and so make their escape. This island they searched "from center to circumference," and ate every shellfish which could be found there, muscles, limpets, periwinkles; then went in among the bushes and gathered some red berries which grew there, and ate them also.

Having laid this island under tribute, they went to the main island, in whose bay the small island was nestled, and there found a quantity of the same red berries. Trees from twelve to fourteen feet high were there seen loaded with them; they obtained a large tub full and took it to their boat. They hesitated at first about eating these berries, not knowing whether they were of a poisonous nature or not; but as they could find nothing else, and nature

demanding food, they were compelled to eat them. But ere long they had ample evidence that such food was not adapted to them; at least that it would not agree with them till their stomachs had become accustomed to receive it. Thomas was seized with violent pain and cramps in the gastric region, which he believed to have been occasioned by eating a hearty meal of those berries. Yet they were to them a "god-send," and this welcome provision of Divine Providence for their wants was the principal article of their sustenance for the six weeks succeeding. They anchored their boat near the shore, and waited those many weeks for a favorable breeze. The anchors of their boat consisted of a beak-iron, some shackles, and iron blocks. There was very little high land on the island, and they could therefore see but a short distance around them.

One day, during those six weeks that Thomas and his companion were on this desolate island, they went over to the other side in search of shellfish, and while clambering about among the rocks he fell prostrate among the smaller rocks in the water. There was some danger of drown-

ing, but as there were large quantities of that kind of sea-weed generally known as "kelp," a species of algæ, of the genus *salicornia*, he clung to its strong leathery leaves, (so strong that they were accustomed to tie their boat to it,) until, by the aid of his companion, he again escaped a watery grave. Truly Thomas could say with the Apostle Paul, that he was "in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea; in weariness, in painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

And though all this was not endured by him, as by the Apostle, for Christ's sake, yet it is hoped that these sufferings will be found to have formed a part of that "sleepless discipline of our heavenly Father" which prepares the sorrowing for the world of joy, the toil-worn for the land of rest.

There was little of variety during their sojourn upon this island to attract their minds from dwelling with sad forebodings upon the future. Often and often did they gaze with



longing eyes far off over the blue waters, with the hope of descrying a distant sail, whose presence in those regions might hold out a faint prospect of relief to them, but all in vain. A few seals only were seen in the water, and one whale of the kind commonly called grampus.

A singular circumstance occurred in relation to the tides. They perceived the ebb and flow of old ocean there as usual; but while they were on this desolate island one day, about the time of the new moon, the tide suddenly receded to a very great distance, and then came in with great velocity, as if some earthquake or similar convulsion of nature had caused it. There was scarcely a breath of air at the time, and this, with the unwonted agitation of the waters, seemed to denote some change in the usual laws of tidal motion.

One night, while here, a violent storm arose. They were sleeping, as they were accustomed to do, in their boat, and were awakened by the excessive motion produced by its swinging from side to side upon the storm-tossed waves. They arose, and having hauled their tiny bark high upon the beach for its safety, they attempted to

raise their little hut for their own comfort ; but almost as fast as they reared it the violent wind prostrated it, till at last they so secured it that they were sheltered in a measure from the pitiless fury of the raging elements. During the night, as he was lying awake thinking upon their dismal condition, Thomas heard what he supposed must be the boat banging, as he expressed it, upon the rocks. Hope sank away in his bosom, for if their boat should be lost, with it would depart all their hope of escape. They arose to secure it, if possible, yet with fainting hearts, and found that it had been driven by the rising waves upon a rock, where she remained, happily without much damage having accrued to her.

The next day, as the wind had lessened, and the waves were calmer, they prepared to leave this island and travel northward again. The tide rose but little, and there was some moonlight to cheer them on their way ; but although Thomas urged instant departure the colored man was obstinate and would not go. So they remained there some days longer. One morning both were lying down in their rude hut,

and suddenly thought they heard the sound of bells. The thought that it might prove to be a ship near them, shot rapturously through their minds; but on looking out through the thick, hazy atmosphere they could discover nothing, nor was any other sound borne on the morning air to their listening ears, and so they returned to their rough couches. In a few moments the well-known sound of dogs barking was heard by them, and with emotions that can better be felt than described; both crawled out of their little low hut into the open air.

“The Indians! the Indians!” exclaimed Thomas, as he caught a glimpse of some natives in the distance, and with almost mortal fear of the new-comers they went back into their hut, and there Thomas prayed aloud for their mutual protection. Arms they had none, and unless kind Providence should soften their hard and cruel hearts, these natives, if the same who had caused the death of Captain Coffin, would probably soon proceed to take the lives of his companions. That prayer must have come from the deepest recesses of a soul earnestly desirous of protection; and though uttered in tremulous tones and feeble

words, the eloquence of its earnestness and sincerity must have found for it a speedy admittance in the ears of the Eternal.

They left the little hut again, choosing to meet the natives as friends or foes beneath the broad canopy of the overarching heavens. Soon the natives saw them, and hastened toward them. Both sexes were there, and as they advanced a native girl held up two fowls. To those who had been almost starved for several weeks the offer of food was too welcome to be neglected, and the poor shipwrecked sufferers rapidly advanced to receive the boon which Providence through these more friendly natives had so kindly granted them. The fowls resembled shags, and were somewhat fishy, but were gladly received; and so much were Thomas and his companion in need of food, that they were about to tear the raw fowl asunder and eat it thus. But the young girl pointed toward a spot not far distant and said "fire." Hastily broiling it on some coals which the natives had obtained, Thomas proceeded to partake of his fowl, and declares it to be the sweetest morsel he ever tasted. After having lived for weeks on

those unpalatable berries, with an occasional change to raw shellfish, it was not strange that a return to something like the diet to which they had previously been accustomed was welcome. Meanwhile the natives were examining everything belonging to George and Thomas; chopping on things occasionally with their rude axes, formed from a rough piece of iron rudely fastened to a piece of wood.

Hoping, as the natives seemed friendly, that they would after a while leave them alone again, Thomas purchased two pieces of stick which were on fire, giving some nails and an old knife-handle in exchange. The natives seemed to understand bartering, and from their use of the English word "fire," Thomas was led to hope that they were not far distant from the northern shores of Terra del Fuego, which, being washed by the waters of the Straits of Magellan, through which vessels occasionally pass, was sometimes visited by English vessels.

It was soon perceptible that these natives were not free from their national covetousness. The blanket which they found on board the wreck had been divided by George and Thomas

between themselves, but the natives were now desirous of appropriating both pieces to their own use. Thomas endeavored to divert their attention from what was so much needed by themselves in that wintry region by giving them the rude fish-line which his father made, and which he had preserved for that father's sake, hoping to be able to take it home as a memento of one whose kindness in life and whose tragie death he could never forget.

Thomas was himself a source of great curiosity to many of the natives. If they had ever seen white people before, they had not evidently seen enough to become entirely familiar with their color, so that they thronged around him, and touched his white skin with their dark, dirty fingers, apparently enjoying the novel sight. So reduced had Thomas become from such long famine, so to speak, that his bones were very prominent, especially the *sternum* or breastbone, and that seemed to interest the natives particularly. They continually repeated the exclamation "O!" in a tone between astonishment and pity.

In their rough handling of the curious object

as Thomas appeared to them, one of them touched his cheek so harshly as to produce pain from a large gum-boil, which had caused him much suffering previously. He very naturally exhibited symptoms of pain, and one of them began to make motions over his cheek similar to the magnetic passes of a mesmerizer, and then made a feint of blowing away the pain. "This," says Thomas, "is what they call withcraft."

So troublesome did the natives become at last in their inquisitiveness, that Thomas was glad when they went away; but on conversing with the colored man, Thomas found that he was of the opinion that they had better stay with the natives than to proceed any farther. Probably the good fare of which he had partaken through their instrumentality had much to do in influencing his judgment in favor of remaining with those who might provide him with similar food in the future. So Thomas went with George to the place where the natives were. He thought, himself, that they were really friendly to them, and while he could not have looked upon the murderers of his father

with any degree of confidence, and certainly would not wish to fraternize with them, he thought that to join these was perhaps the best that could be done at present, and so yielded to the wish of the colored man and went to them.

But it was like voluntarily going into captivity. When they reached the spot where the natives were, they found the women building a house from the green branches which the men had cut. The turf there is not thick and tough as is ours, but soft; and beneath it was a bed of something which resembled peat. So the women placed the branches in the ground, and spread seal-skins over them for a roof. At the backside the men made a green seat of earth and turf, having first dried the turf.

The natives treated George and Thomas as kindly as could be expected from those whose manners were so rude as to lead to a reasonable doubt of their having studied Chesterfield. But it was soon evident that they had entered into captivity, for Thomas was sent by them, with a ludicrous air of superiority, after water, and



the colored man after shellfish. Thomas was soon permitted to join him in the search, and as Nature again began to assert her claim to food, and they feared the natives might not share liberally with them, they ate some of the raw shellfish, and pocketed some also, which they afterward roasted, and found much more palatable in that form. The natives produced more of the fowls, and they had the satisfaction of again partaking of more palatable food than that to which they had been so long confined.

Toward night one of the natives bade Thomas accompany him. So he obediently followed the dark-browed savage, hoping that his soul was whiter than his skin, and that he would do him no injury. With a heavy club the native broke down the bushes that obstructed their pathway, and on they went, crossing several small streams where Thomas had the misfortune to fall from excessive weariness, though without receiving much injury. As near as Thomas could discover, the object of this excursion was to "beat the bush for game," or, in other words, to hunt for food. At last, after the long and weary

walk, for which Thomas had hardly sufficient strength, they returned, and he gladly sunk down on the ground to rest, and watched the operations of those who were preparing the evening repast, which was served in the most primitive style. Their manner of cooking fowls is to cut them open, taking out the intestines, a portion of which they eat, throwing away that which we throw away, and then roast them on the coals. In cooking penguin, as Thomas afterward discovered, they first burn off the feathers, open the bird, and then roast it.

Thomas slept that night by the side of one of the natives on a bed composed of green bushes. The colored man slept on a piece of canvas. During the night Thomas often rose in order to attend to the fire, which appeared to him a possession so desirable that he was willing to take all possible care to prevent losing it. But the native by whose side he was lying remonstrated so often that he finally desisted, and toward morning the pieces of wood burned to cinders that glowed a while amid the darkness of the night, then burned to ashes, and the fire went out. But the natives

did not care. They knew very well how to obtain it with ease, and did not mean to have their night's rest disturbed by care for its preservation. The wonder is that they ever learned how to procure it in that far-off region of ice and snow.

In the morning one of the natives took some feathers or down and used it for tinder, striking fire upon it with two stones. The sparks ignited the tinder, and a fire was soon obtained. They would sometimes be a half hour obtaining it in this way.

The party remained at this spot about a week. The natives took one of the sails of the boat and cut it up to obtain threads to use for sewing; the other they made into a square sail, for from the time that Thomas and George came over to their house the natives took possession of them and theirs. Thomas cannot be censured for this, since he could not go on alone; and to the colored man the choice seemed to lie between captivity and starvation. Henceforth their hope of escape was based upon the fact that these natives being friendly would protect them from others who might wish to do them

harm, and would also aid them in obtaining food. By traveling toward the Straits of Magellan they might meet a ship there, and be induced to receive a ransom for them, and allow them peaceably to return to their home and surviving friends.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## CAPTIVITY.

Poor child of danger, nursling of the storm,  
 Sad are the woes that wreck thy manly form:  
 Rocks, waves, and winds the shattered bark delay ;  
 Thy heart is sad, thy home is far away.      CAMPBELL.

The ways of Heaven are dark and intricate,  
 Puzzled in mazes, and perplexed with errors ;  
 Our understanding traces them in vain,  
 Lost and bewildered in the fruitless search,  
 Nor sees with how much art the windings run,  
 Nor where the regular confusion ends.  
ADDISON'S CATO.

THOMAS and his companion had now begun a new life, that of servants to the natives, who seemed to regard them, and all they possessed, as a lawful prize. There were five children in the party, one of whom was an infant. They had also a few dogs with them, whose principal food consists of the mussels which, by their instinct in searching for themselves, they aided their masters in discovering for the sustenance of the human members of the party. Thomas was often sent to look for shellfish. At his

early home he had never been accustomed to eat mussels; but his mother had a fancy for them, and he had often sought for them in order to gratify her *penchant*, and now, as he sought for them day after day, the thought of that departed mother rushed often to his mind, till the tears coursed down his thin cheeks, and dropping, as he leaned over the wave-worn rocks, mingled with the briny wave.

It was soon evident to Thomas that these natives were only down upon this island in search of something to sustain life. Their whole existence, as he afterward learned, is a struggle to obtain sufficient food. They seem to have no idea of any pleasures beyond sensual gratifications, and they are perfectly satisfied in their dreary, filthy huts, if they only have enough to eat.

The week passed on without many incidents, till one morning Thomas awoke, and to his astonishment found himself alone. For a moment he thought he was bereft of every comrade, even of his colored shipmate. But in a few moments a native entered with a little boy upon his back, and bade Thomas follow him. They

walked some distance through the woods till they came near an open space, and there Thomas sat down, feeling unable to walk further. He was very weak, and worn almost to a skeleton. Before him were five little children gathering red berries. He was apparently left with the care of them. Some of the children brought him some berries, which he ate, and when rested he felt strong enough to gather more, and hungry enough to eat them.

Shortly after a native came wearing something like a belt, containing about four or five dozen little fat birds which he had just secured. These were immediately cooked by the women, who had a fire near, in the same manner that the larger birds were cooked, and were then eaten, "heads and all."

Thomas afterward learned that the young birds, which are a species of sea-bird, occupy holes in the ground so deep that a native would sometimes be obliged to thrust his arm its full length into the cavity ere he could secure them. Their dogs are useful in scenting out the abodes of these little birds; the natives then catch them, usually two or three in the same cavity, break

their necks with the teeth, and put them into the belt or pouch for food in the future. They spent most of the day hunting for these little birds, and then returned to their rude hut. Soon after they spent another day in the same place, and at its close Thomas and the colored man were forcibly reminded of their captive state by being compelled to carry home a quantity of wood for fuel upon their backs.

The natives regarding their boat as much better than a canoe, hauled the latter up high and dry, and took possession of the former. During this operation the notched stick was lost, and from that time Thomas did not keep any "reckoning." In order still further to maintain the friendly relation existing between the natives and their captives, Thomas gave them the fish-hooks and needles which he had found on board the wreck, but had hitherto kept in his pockets, unsuspected by the natives, who, to his surprise, had not seemed thus far to think of searching him.

Having apparently obtained all the food possible from the island where they then were, the whole party proceeded to another island which



Thomas had not before visited. Here they sought again for birds, with decoys, which they had tamed for the purpose and kept in rough willow cages. Thomas did not understand that they were thus used, at first, and therefore, when he saw one of them out on one occasion, he imagined it had escaped, and running after it for a long distance, succeeded in capturing it, only to receive censure instead of praise. Thenceforth he used none of his little stock of strength in trying to catch decoy birds.

One day the women went to a little cove for the purpose of fishing, taking Thomas and his companion with them to act as their servants in preparing bait, etc. Their fishing-rod and line consisted of a long, rough pole, with some strong twisted grass for a line, and mussels formed the principal bait used. The women jerked the fish into the boat with greater dexterity than grace. Sometimes they cut some of the fishes in small pieces to use for bait with which to secure others, and they seemed thus to catch them more rapidly. Some of the fish were white, and glistening like silver; while others were as yellow and brilliant as our gold-fishes.

They pursued this occupation for several days, and on one of those days did not seem disposed to give Thomas any food. He bore his hunger as long as possible, fearing their displeasure if he paused to eat any of their prizes ; but at last hunger was fierce enough to overcome all considerations of prudence, and snatching up a fish he actually bit off the head and ate it. The natives did not seem to like this very well, so he forbore till their fishing season was over. Meanwhile the colored man had enough to eat, as he was rather more a favorite with the natives ; but as he selfishly refrained from offering any to Thomas, the latter had too much Yankee pride to ask for any, so long as his hunger could be borne.

One of the decoy birds having flown away, the party went to another island in search of it, and happily succeeded in securing it again. The natives then pursued their course northward, as Thomas judged from the position of the sun, visiting many other islands, on one of which they saw a seal, and paddling round to the other side of the island, they landed cautiously, and one native "stripped himself for

the battle," prepared his spear, with a quantity of kelp attached to it, then drew silently near to the seal. He threw his spear, but the rock alone was struck, the seal had escaped.

One day the natives prepared to hunt some birds similar to those which they gave Thomas at their first meeting. Having blackened their faces with charcoal, they took a long pole with whalebone attached to it in the form of a slip-knot. With this apparatus they succeeded in capturing three of those shags.

Sometimes they would go in search of shell-fish, and on one occasion they secured their boat half full of mussels. Thomas was suffering from hunger on that day, yet they scarcely gave him any. He was often able to echo the words of Captain Bourne, the "captive in Patagonia:" "Our life was monotonous enough. We slept a good share of the time when we rested, drank pure water when we could get it, and ate what fell in our way; though the reader may be assured that we saw some hungry days." This was very true when he and the colored man were alone, but scarcely less so when they were with the natives.

Thus far they had met with no other natives, and this circumstance was a pleasant one to Thomas, for he could not help fearing that they might some time meet with the hard-hearted and cruel natives who had proved themselves, to his deep sorrow, so treacherous and blood-thirsty.

At last, one day a smoke was perceived rising from an island toward which they were going. The natives immediately began to beautify (?) themselves, preparatory to a landing. With some kind of ochre they painted themselves red and white in alternated stripes and various figures, till they presented a horrible appearance. They then sharpened their knives, till Thomas began to fear it was with enemies and not friends that they expected to meet. This operation over, they placed their hands to their mouths, and gave loud and successive whoops, reminding Thomas of what he had previously read about the American Indians. They soon drew near the shore, and while those on shore threw rocks, those in the boat threw their spears. Then all began to weep aloud with a hideous wailing. All this was their manner of

welcoming each other. Two natives at last went ashore on this island, which was very low, and soon came back with a portion of blubber, which was received with great delight by all the other natives, and eaten with avidity.

After their party had landed on the island the word of warning was given that a canoe was coming. Thomas was placed behind a stump in order that he might be safer, and the welcoming ceremonies again commenced. After they had thrown stones enough, and both parties had ceased wailing, those in the canoe came on shore, and it was discovered that they had two seals in the boat, and several penguins. Those previously on shore gave the new comers some whale's flesh, and they departed, after asking Thomas to go with them; but he concluded that he had better stay where he was, and with those with whom he was most acquainted.

When they had rested a short time they proceeded to another island with many currents around it. Here Thomas could see the Straits of Magellan in the far horizon, but at the time he did not know it. They remained at this

place for some time, and were joined by some of those they had just left at the other island, and some whom they had seen in the canoe which touched there; but on this occasion there were no welcoming ceremonies. At this island there were some old women and boys, but no old men. Their party remained here for some time, and having a tolerable supply of food, Thomas was feasted by them on food which he often loathed, though hunger compelled him to accept it. They stayed here two or three weeks, as near as he could judge, and lived on penguins and fish. The boys would sometimes try to make Thomas stand and let them throw food into his mouth, as they would throw it to a dog; but his own natural independence of character forbade their captive to allow it. Captivity could not subdue his indomitable energy, or native self-respect.

By and by more natives came to them and brought a quantity of blubber. In the course of their sojourn together the natives endeavored to make Thomas conform to their style of beauty (?) by painting him as they painted themselves, and brushing his hair in their own

peculiar manner. This was far from pleasing to him, but he dared not object, and thought compliance better than quarreling.

The desire to obtain more of the blubber induced the natives to go to the island from whence it had been brought to them. Here they met a new party of natives, and welcomed each other in the usual noisy manner, with the addition of a wrestling match. They remained here about four weeks, in which time Thomas had a view of the whale from which a part of his daily supply of food had been taken. It was already green with putrefaction, and had apparently died at sea, and been thrown upon the shore, where it was discovered by the natives.

Some of the new party of natives, as Thomas learned, had seen a ship recently, for they were nearly all dressed in sailor clothing. When Thomas first saw them in their boat, his heart leaped with joy and hope, for he thought, judging from their appearance, that they were a party of sailors in a jolly boat. They had such a boat, probably bought or stolen from some ship. We can imagine the disappointment of

the youthful captive when he discovered his mistake.

The natives all lived together while here, and subsisted on the blubber and on shell-fish. Thomas had been in the habit of singing a hymn, which, when the natives heard, they insisted on compelling him to sing more and more. At last he grew weary of singing, and then one native, who had hitherto seemed to regard Thomas as his servant in particular, began to kick him, and kicked him almost into the fire. This treatment Yankee independence could not endure, and Thomas declared he would serve him no more. So he left him, and went to one of the natives named "John," and claimed his protection, which was accorded. There were several among the natives who had received names, the very sound of which made Thomas feel more hopeful, for he rightly judged if these natives had seen enough of ships to secure these names it was very probable they would see more of them in future, and in that way he might escape or be ransomed. One of these natives was called "Charlie," and another "Captain;" and one of the women was called



“Lydia,” which frequently called to mind his mother’s only sister, far away on his island home. O how he longed to escape when he heard that familiar name !

The natives were kind to Thomas in replenishing his wardrobe, till he became the possessor of a pair of shoes, pantaloons, a jacket, shirt, cap, and suspenders. In short, he felt himself to be clad in quite a civilized manner when he donned his suit. But there was one great drawback to his happiness. These articles had already been somewhat worn by the natives themselves, and had become well filled with vermin, which, from his close contact with his uncleanly masters, Thomas had already shared with them. The vermin were a source of constant annoyance to him. Apart from a sense of uncleanliness, they were uncomfortable companions ; and he was glad to be relieved of them, even though it was in a manner which excited extreme loathing and disgust, namely, by allowing himself, his head especially, to be a hunting-ground for natives in search of food.

One of the natives, who wore a monkey-jacket, could say several English words, among

which were "tabac" for tobacco, "ship," and "yes."

One day Thomas was looking, as he was wont to do, far off upon the Straits of Magellan, when he thought he espied a ship. He watched for its approach, but in vain, and he was compelled to believe that the object was but a rock. At last, one day, as he put his head out of the door of their hut, he caught sight of a full-rigged brig. O how he longed for some way of attracting attention! He could scarcely be reconciled to the fact that she must pass without taking him on board. She was too far out in the straits for them to venture to reach her. The colored man advised taking their boat, and making the effort; but Thomas thought it would be fruitless, and the attempt would only rouse the anger of the natives, and tend to their discomfort, if to nothing worse.

One day in April, as they afterward found it must have been, they espied a steamship passing through the Straits. She had left Valparaiso the first of April, as they learned, but they dared not try to reach her themselves, though they promised the natives "pipe" and "tabac" if

they would but aid them to get on board. Hope was still strong in their hearts, however, though the natives refused ; for as long as they were within sight of the highway for vessels, there was a prospect, though faint, that they might be rescued.

But, to the sorrow of the captives, the natives required them to go with their masters in the old boat, a long day's sail back to the same island where they once feasted, and there they constructed a hut. Fifteen huts were reared there by the natives, and the party subsisted again on penguins and fish.

At last, one day, when he had almost given up the hope of reaching the Straits during that season, the natives started and went toward the Whale Island. But instead of stopping there Thomas was delighted to perceive that they were going farther on toward the Straits. The canoes separated, going through different channels ; but at last they all met, and kept on toward the Straits. Thomas was in the jolly-boat and assisted in rowing.

When the island toward which they were hastening was reached, they found two families

there who had several puppies, whose familiar appearance, added to that of some iron pots which they possessed, made the spot seem still more homelike. The happiest hours which Thomas passed while a captive, though none of them were really happy or even pleasant, were spent here, since he was now so near the Straits that hope brightened continually. When they reached an island, for they journeyed on a little longer, which was on the southern side of the Straits, and realized that the Magellan waters washed the shores of that island, they were overjoyed. The colored man shouted again and again, "hurrah ! hurrah !"

The next morning their party went over to the Patagonian side, where they remained about a week and a half. It rained violently while they were there, occasionally snowed, and the wind was constantly very high. After the storm was over they went along shore to another bay, where they stopped one day and built huts. All at once Thomas discovered an animal resembling a goat in the water at the side of the canoe just landed, uttering its peculiar "baa, baa." It was of a gray color, with short horns.

Some suppose it to be synonymous with the guanaco, described by Captain Bourne in his book entitled "The Captive in Patagonia," but Thomas seems to think it a different animal. The natives had caught it, and were now towing it after their canoe. In a few moments a loud scream arose from the natives; and, turning, Thomas saw them in full pursuit of another of these goats. It was now evident to him that the object of the natives in coming hither was to procure these animals for food. To Thomas the change of diet was very acceptable. The dogs were sent after the goat just discovered, and he was finally captured by the women in the canoe. Their manner of cooking the animal reminded Thomas of what he had read in regard to the practices of Pacific islanders. Hot stones were placed inside of the opened animal, and it was then roasted on the embers. The natives continued their search after more of these animals, and succeeded in surprising another. While after the third, as night was drawing on, suddenly the joyful tidings came to the captives that a ship was in sight and coming toward them. The native women inquired by signs of

Thomas whether he wished to go in the ship. Of course he replied in the affirmative. The natives gave them plenty to eat on this night, partly because they had a large quantity of provisions, and partly because they were pleased with the prospect of obtaining through them some benefit from the ship. They were usually better natured when they had a quantity of provisions in their possession, and with them feasting and fasting alternated, for they were, like all barbarous nations, very improvident.

During the evening of this eventful day the natives went on a point of land stretching out toward the ship, and there kindled a large fire, hoping by that means to entice those on board the ship to anchor near. A party of the natives started about twilight to go to the ship, but she was so far off, and night so near, that they deemed it unsafe to continue on the water, and so returned. Ere the shades of evening had hidden her from view the watchful eyes of the captives saw the crew take in studdingsails, and came to the pleasing conclusion that they were designing to tarry in that vicinity for a while.

Some of the natives were busied during the evening in skinning the goats preparatory to taking them on board the ship next day to barter. As for Thomas, the unwonted supply of food, of which he had partaken somewhat too largely, and, above all, the excitement attendant on the ship's arrival, acted unfavorably on his health, and he was ill during much of the night.

## CHAPTER IX.

## LIBERTY.

O! give me liberty!  
 For were e'en paradise my prison,  
 Still I should long to leap the crystal walls.—DRYDEN.

Liberty, like day,  
 Breaks on the soul, and by a flash from heaven  
 Fires all the faculties with glorious joy.—COWPER.

SCARCELY could Thomas sleep through the long night which followed the discovery of the ship, and when he did fall into an unquiet doze, it was only to dream of that ship, of liberty, and home. He was, as we may readily imagine, weary of his exile, and weary of his captivity. He was worn and ill by hunger and servitude, and he longed to lay his head upon a quiet pillow in his native isle, and receive sympathy in his bereavement and sorrow from those who knew and valued the dear ones who had so suddenly and sadly left him.

Morning at length came. At daylight Thomas was on the beach to observe the



position of the vessel, which he hoped was to him the herald of liberty and the messenger of joy. She was quite near to the shore. Thomas usually went in "John's" boat, and the colored man in another. But it was evidently no part of the design of the natives to take either of their captives to the ship. Instead of that they were both ordered to go into a boat with two women and two boys, and seek around the shores in a different direction for shellfish. This was far from being pleasant to those who were longing to return to their native country. Yet they could do no better at that time, and they resolved to obey quietly, in order to allay suspicion, and then watch for an opportunity to escape. While the captives were reluctantly looking for shellfish, some of the natives went on board the ship and traded with the crew.

Toward afternoon, when hope deferred had almost made the hearts of the captives sick, the vessel came toward their boat. The natives in their boats were not near enough to prevent Thomas from taking off his old neckcloth and waving it, as a signal to those on board the ship

that some one wished to speak with them. With all sail set, the vessel bore down toward them. Hope revived! Both Thomas and the colored man now threatened the women and boys with instant and severe punishment if they hindered their escape in the least, and they therefore stopped paddling away from the ship. In a few moments the maintopsail of the gallant craft was backed, and she lay to, as Thomas thought, to wait for their approach. But no! in a few seconds she was on her way again, steering in an opposite direction, and soon passing round a bluff near them, was entirely out of sight. Hope died in the hearts of the captives. The horrors of exile were gathering in thick darkness about them again. The chains of their slavery were again clanking in their ears. With hopeless agony they allowed the women and boys to pursue their course back toward the other natives.

In a few moments, however, one of the women exclaimed "ship! ship!" and looking joyfully back they saw her flying-jib just in sight as she came back round the point. She had only been tacking, and soon came nearer

them and anchored. Meanwhile, as she drew near them, Thomas and the colored man, working with a will, and overawing the others in the boat with terrific threats, which in their dire extremity they considered justifiable, were pulling their canoe toward the ship. Just as she dropped her anchor Thomas sprang into the chains; but so weak was he through suffering and want of food, that those on board were obliged to aid him, and in a brief period he once more stood upon the deck of a ship.\* God be praised! was the one thought of his joyful heart.

As soon as he found strength and breath to speak, he asked, "Are there any that speak English on board?" Some one with a Spanish accent answered in the affirmative. Then he asked, "Where's the captain?"

Thomas and his shipmate were then standing near the forecastle, and while some one went to inform the captain that the rescued ones desired to speak with him, Thomas and George stepped aside, and held a brief season of prayer and thanksgiving together. They had made a

\* See Frontispiece.

practice of this while exiles and captives, and it seemed natural as well as appropriate for them to do so on this occasion, while by the devout, though deluded, Catholics on board, it was simply esteemed a common act, and they probably supposed their new companions to be offering a vow to some saint on account of their recent deliverance.

The captain of the ship was upon the upper deck, and readily gave permission for the rescued captives to come into his presence. With very natural curiosity all on board flocked round them to hear the narration of their adventures. Thomas told his story briefly, and claimed protection for himself and shipmate in the name of humanity and of his country. The captain assured them of his protection, and his willingness to convey them to the port whither himself was bound, giving them on the voyage food and raiment. Meanwhile the natives had come on board, earnestly soliciting Thomas and George to return. But in vain were all their entreaties. Liberty was too sweet, and home too dear to be thus readily relinquished.

At the request of the rescued ones, the captain

gave them some tobacco and pipes, which they speedily passed over to the natives, not feeling that they owed them anything, but hoping that if rewarded now, they would more readily permit the escape of any others who might fall into their hands. But the captain did not furnish quite as much ransom as Thomas thought desirable, not realizing, as the rescued boy did, how important it is to conciliate such a barbarous people. Thomas gave them all he could, including the old clothes which he wore when he escaped, and which, though full of vermin, were very acceptable to them.

The captain gave to Thomas only a shirt, a pair of trowsers, and a Scotch cap; but two Chinamen and an English carpenter who were on board, added to these some hose and shoes.

The vessel in which they left the inhospitable shores of Terra del Fuego was a Chilian man-of-war, and the shirt which Thomas wore was decorated with a star as a part of the Chilian uniform. Almost the first thing which the captain ordered to be done for Thomas and his shipmate was to cut off their matted locks, and cleanse them, by bathing, etc., from the vermin

which infested them. Then, as Thomas related to the physician of the ship his sickness of the night before, and gave some account of the detestable food he had sometimes been compelled to eat, he ordered an immediate emetic, using warm water for that purpose in an astonishing quantity, and giving the stomach of the poor lad the relief it had so long needed.

O how delightful seemed the change of fare on board the ship! Though they had scarcely anything but rice and beans, yet these were exquisite after so much detestable food—putrid whale, raw shellfish, etc.

The ship was bound to Valparaiso, at which place Thomas expected to find letters from his home, and whence he supposed he could easily find means to reach his native shore. Ere they left the vicinity of Terra del Fuego they anchored off another island, a little one, and Thomas went on shore with a boat's crew. Here he saw a large cross with the letters "I. N. R. I.," probably placed there by some Catholics, and signifying in English, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Thomas carved his own initials, "T. E. C.," near these letters.

Should any who may read this narrative ever visit this lonely island and mark these letters carved on the cross erected there, let them remember the story of the orphan boy, as one of those tales of truth which, while it reveals sadness and sorrow, tells also in unmistakable language of the goodness of that God who so wonderfully preserved his life amid so many dangers. The hand of God was laid heavily upon him in his bereavements, evidently in kindness and not in anger, that by this peculiar discipline, hard as it may seem, his young soul might be strengthened, and fitted for life's duties and life's responsibilities. Thus should affliction ever prove an angel to lead us on toward joy, rather than a destroyer with uplifted weapon against our purest pleasures.

It was on the 24th of May that Thomas and George went on board the "Meteor," as the Chilian vessel was called, and on the 25th of June, 1855, the ship arrived at Valparaiso. It was the forenoon of the Sabbath when they entered the harbor of that city. As they approached they saw an English vessel and exchanged colors. When anchored, the captain

went on shore, and shortly afterward Thomas was at a comfortable boarding-house, and under the protection of the American consul.

His story found many sympathizing listeners. A young, intelligent lad, only sixteen years and two months old, to have endured such sufferings, and finally to have escaped, was a marvel to them ; and day after day the people thronged around him wherever he went, to hear the story which had already been widely circulated from his own youthful lips. Born on the 16th of June, 1838, Thomas was, as before stated, only about sixteen years old, and but few of his age have passed through such varied and distressing scenes. The wonder was that he ever lived to tell his sad story. He often felt while bearing heavy burdens, and toiling hard among the natives, that he would rather die than live ; but whenever he expressed such a feeling to the colored man, the latter would beg him to cheer up and live for his sake. And yet his shipmate was far from being as kind to him as he ought to have been.

On first going ashore in Valparaiso, Thomas was taken by his boarding-master to a shop,



where he obtained needful clothing. The next morning he received through the consul three letters directed to his father. We can imagine his emotions as he opened that father's letters, knowing that the eye for which they were designed would never rest upon their pages; but words would fail us in the attempt to describe them.

He remained about three weeks and a half at Valparaiso, receiving invitations from all the English and American residents, whose kindness he amply repaid by narrating in their hearing the thrilling story of his shipwreck, bereavements, and captivity.

On the 19th of July, 1855, he left Valparaiso for Baltimore, reaching that port in the latter part of October, and from thence he went to his island home, the sympathies of whose inhabitants his sad story fully awakened. As he passed around Cape Horn, on his way to Baltimore, his eye rested not upon that "dark corner of the earth" which he had seen to verify the Scripture declaration, that it was "full of the habitations of cruelty;" for the captain of that ship, warned by the orphan's story, wisely gave the lands in the vicinity of Cape Horn a wide berth.

His colored shipmate was also on board the same ship which bore Thomas to Baltimore, and it is hoped will live to be ashamed of his harsh treatment to one whose own mental and bodily sufferings were already almost "too grievous to be borne."

## CHAPTER X.

## THE MISSING VESSEL.

Uncertainty !

Fell demon of our fears ! The human soul  
That can support despair, supports not thee

MALLET'S MUSTAPHA.

As may well be supposed, the friends and relatives of those who were on board the "Manchester," and also her owners, and those interested in her cargo, were somewhat anxious for the safety of the ship, her cargo, and her more precious freight of human lives. Again and again, as the signal on the flag-staff in Nantucket denoted the arrival of the California mail in that port, those anxious ones looked earnestly and hopefully for tidings from the missing vessel. But as often they were doomed to disappointment ; and at last they, sadly and reluctantly, gave up all hope of hearing anything about her, and numbered her among the lost, whose fate, hid in mystery, the future world alone would reveal. And yet the spark of hope would glimmer occa-

sionally in some hearts as they thought some one, at least, of the crew might be saved, like the messenger to Job of yore, to tell the story of their shipwreck.

There was one painful fact connected with the longing for news of the "Manchester" which every sympathizing heart will appreciate, though to it the parties are entirely unknown. While the body of her husband had found a watery grave far away on the bleak coast of Cape Horn, the patient wife of the first mate, whose parting we mentioned in the first chapter, was lying on a bed of sickness from which she never arose. With thoughtful kindness the friends about her forebore to whisper in her presence the general impression in the community that the ship was lost, and she went calmly and submissively to her grave; wrapping the mantle of her youthful faith about her, little realizing that she would so soon learn the fate of her husband by meeting him upon the immortal shore.

Who shall say they have not met in a happier world? And who shall say their watching spirits do not hover, in company with that other angel

mother, (the mate's first wife, they were sisters,) over the three orphans left on earth ! May the orphan children of both the captain and the mate of the ill-fated "Manchester," realize the blessed anticipation of another afflicted one, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord shall take me up."

It was in August, 1854, that the "Manchester" struck on the rocks near Terra del Fuego, and it was in August, 1855, a year afterward, that the tidings of the shipwreck first reached Nantucket. An extra edition of the Nantucket papers was immediately printed, containing the letters which had been received ; for the editors rightly believed that the entire community would eagerly receive all the news from a vessel so long missing ; and that human sympathy for the survivors, always evident in a seafaring community, where all are liable to be personally interested in similar tidings, would lead every family to desire a copy of the letters. They are appended here as they were then published, showing the character of the first news, which came like a thunderbolt into the intensely interested community, bearing the tidings of

bereavement and the call to mourning to many true and loving hearts upon the island. It should be understood that wherever the letters seem to conflict with the narrative as here written, it is because they were penned in haste, under circumstances of great excitement, or by those who were only partially acquainted with the facts. The following was published in the "Nantucket Inquirer:"

"The ship Manchester, Captain Alexander H. Coffin, of Nantucket, from New York, April 7th, 1854, for Valparaiso, before reported as a missing vessel, struck a sunken rock on August 28th, in about latitude  $55^{\circ}$  south, to the westward of Cape Horn, drifted until the 29th, when she grounded at five A. M. on a small island, and opened in two parts."

The following particulars of the disaster are contained in a letter dated on board the Spanish war vessel *Meteoro*, Don Bueneventura Martinez, commander, May 25, 1855. It is presumed to be the statement of the captain's son, one of the survivors:

"The American ship Manchester, of Nantucket, left New York for Valparaiso on the

7th of April, 1854, the complement of hands on board being seventeen, and the captain's wife. One man died at sea before we arrived at Montevideo, which port we put into on the 24th of July, 1854, and again left on the 28th for Valparaiso, after having shipped four extra hands at Montevideo.

“On the 28th of August, after passing Cape Horn, the ship struck on a sunken rock in about latitude  $55^{\circ}$  south, and to the southward of the Cape, land distant thirty miles. Not being able to keep her free with pumps got the boats out, which were shortly afterward stove: had afterward the mainmast cut away.

“At twelve the same night she was full of water, but continued to drift until five A. M. of the 29th, when, after passing a small island, she grounded, and in twenty minutes opened in two parts, and all on board were immersed in the water. The captain and his wife clung together, but by some chance got separated, and the captain alone rose to the surface; he immediately seized upon a plank, and succeeded in rescuing his son, on which plank they drifted to the stern part of the vessel, where they re-

mained till sunset, having concluded they were the only survivors of the ill-fated ship. They then managed to get ashore on the island, where they found one barrel of bread and another of flour.

“Four days after the second mate and one seaman arrived at the island on a raft they had constructed on another island on which they were cast, distant one and a half miles. Here they remained while the captain was building a boat. Having all crossed on the raft to the island on which the second mate first landed, (where was much of the wreck of the ship and cargo and provisions,) on the 3d of November the second mate died, being completely exhausted. His name was David Rees Evans, a native of South Wales.

“November 19th we first saw any of the natives, some men and women having landed from a canoe. We had just finished our boat and were ready for starting. The Indians having at first received what could be spared to them of our clothes, etc., retired, and afterward returned with bludgeons, and insisted on stripping us. Three attacked the captain and three the sea-



man, who having disabled two of them fled to the boat in which the boy already was. Unfortunately the captain received a blow which must have instantly killed him. The boy received two arrows in his jacket, but escaped unhurt. We landed on the island where part of the wreck still remained. Returning in the evening we found the captain's body lying naked on the rocks and dead. Not daring to remain, we took two barrels of bread and returned to the wreck.

“After remaining several days we ventured along the coast in our boat. At the end of about six weeks we found the provisions all expended, and subsisted on such shellfish as we could gather among the rocks. After subsisting for some time in this way a native canoe hove in sight. Being destitute of food for a month at least, except the raw shellfish, we gave ourselves up to the Indians, and having nothing to excite their cupidity, they behaved very kindly to us; and with them we remained up to the present time, having never once seen a vessel until a steamer passed a few days since, but we had no communication with her.

“Our eternal gratitude is due to the captain of the *Meteoro*, who has taken us on board, and fed and clothed us.

“Our ship was called the ‘*Manchester*,’ of Nantucket, Captain Alexander Hall Coffin, from New York, bound for Valparaiso, with a cargo of coals and lumber, from the firm of Cartwright & Harrison, of New York. Saved, Thomas E. Coffin, the captain’s son, and Robert Wells, seaman, of Boston.

“The commander of the *Meteoro* says, that in his passage in the Straits, having anchored in Port Gallant (Fortescue Bay) during the night of the 24th of May; on the 25th several Indians in canoes came alongside, among whom were two Americans, literally as naked as themselves. He took them on board and brought them to Valparaiso, fulfilling for his part a duty imposed on him by Christianity and humanity.”

After the foregoing was in type, Mr. Seth B. Coffin kindly handed us the following letters received by him, one from the United States Consul at Valparaiso, and the other from the son of Captain Coffin:

“ UNITED STATES CONSULATE,  
VALPARAISO, *June 29, 1855.*

“ SETH B. COFFIN, ESQ., Nantucket.

“ MY DEAR SIR : I inclose you the following letter of Thomas E. Coffin, giving the melancholy account of the death of his father and mother, and the loss of the ship ‘ Manchester,’ of New York, and of his sufferings and perils. I have only time to say that he is in good health, and I shall send him and Robert Wells, seaman, who was saved, and has been with him all the time, to Baltimore, in the bark ‘ Eliza,’ Captain Phillips, who is a kind, good man, and will take good care of Thomas, and who will see that he goes from Baltimore home. The bark will sail in a few days.

“ In haste, very respectfully,

“ GEO. B. MERWIN,  
*Consul of the United States.*”

“ VALPARAISO, *June 20, 1855.*

“ DEAR COUSIN SETH : Can I, must I tell the sad tale ? Yes, I must. The ship ‘ Manchester,’ of Nantucket, left Montevideo July 28, 1854. We had very pleasant weather till we got off the Capes, then we had an awful gale which

lasted two weeks, in which time we made very little headway. On the morning of the 28th of August we struck a sunken rock about thirty miles from the land. As soon as we had struck we sounded the pumps, and found she made water fast. We rigged them and went to pumping, but having coal in that choked them, we got the boats out, but there being a heavy sea running, they were stove ; then there was no hope but the ship. Having lumber in, father thought that she might keep on the top of the water provided she had her masts cut away, which was done. At three o'clock in the afternoon we saw land. At nine o'clock in the evening she was full of water, and the sea made a clean breach over her. At five o'clock the next morning she went on a reef close to the land, and being full of water a heavy sea broke her up in twenty minutes. Father and mother, the steward, second mate, and myself were in the cabin, Mr. Pitman and crew were on the house, when the mainmast went by the board, carrying him and the crew overboard, and we heard nothing more of them. Those in the cabin when the ship went to pieces went down

all among the timber, rocks, and kelp. Father had his arm around mother, and he did not intend to part with her, but a rope or chain passing between them, they were separated. Mother never came up, but father and myself arose. He saw me and said, 'What poor soul is that?' and I replied, 'It is Thomas.' He then told me to come to him, and I did so, and we got upon the lumber. By and by we saw the stern of the ship and got upon it, and drifted five miles to an island. Four days after we were joined by the second mate and one seaman from another island, three miles from the ship. We remained on the island one month; in that time father made a boat, and we went to the island where the second mate came from. There we found provisions and some lumber. Father made another boat larger than the first, intending to get to St. Carlos, on the island of Chiloe, six hundred miles from where we were, but, alas! he never succeeded. On the 2d of November the second mate died of consumption. On the 22d of the same month some natives came to the island; we received them with kindness, and took them into our house and warmed

them, and gave them biscuit and water. Seeing the second mate's clothes they wanted them, and we gave them all but a pair of pants. When they were ready to go we gave them some more bread, and they left and went on to the top of the hill and deposited the clothes. One came back, and father said, 'Thomas, get him a chunk of fire.' I did so; but he did not want that; he wanted more clothes. We gave them the pants then, and then the rest came down and wanted the clothes that were on us. Father said, 'You don't want our clothes, and for us to be naked and cold?' but they were treacherous. Father saw it in their eyes, and said, 'George, get a bolt and defend yourself.' Then I had to witness an awful scene. One native tried to wrench the bolt that father had, while two others got on the top of him, having a club hammer, with which they gave him an awful blow over the left eye, which knocked it out and spilt his brains all over his face. At the same time George had three more on him, but he knocked two over. They ran a spear through the sleeve of my left arm. Seeing father on the ground, I ran to him, and tried to

put him into the boat, but he was too heavy. George, seeing father on the ground, said, 'Take me, take my clothes, but don't kill me.' Said I, 'No, jump into the boat.' We shoved her off, and I jumped in, but he fell in the water. The natives, seeing that we were escaping, ran on a point of land and threw a spear at me; but the Almighty guided it, and it passed within a few inches of my body, and struck in the boat and broke in pieces; then George got in. Finding that they could not reach us with spears they began to throw rocks at us, one of which struck me on the head, gave me a gash, and the scar of it will remain through life. We worked our boat to another island close to where the ship struck, and there was the fore part of the ship and some canvas, but not a soul was there or any provisions. We made a boat's sail, and after committing ourselves to the care of the Almighty, we started back to our island to get the bread. When we arrived there we found father's dead body stripped naked. We obtained two barrels of bread, and having got them into the boat we left as quickly as possible, as we didn't know but what the natives might

be concealed. We also left father's body on the rocks. We got back to the hulk, and there we remained till nearly all our bread was out, waiting for a fair wind and good weather. At last they came, and we started for St. Carlos with one half barrel of bread. We managed to get one hundred miles along the coast. At last our provisions were out, and we lived six weeks on raw mussels, berries, and roots. On the 15th of February, 1855, we saw some natives, and they being friendly we gave ourselves up to them, and remained with them till May 25, 1855. While living with them we lived principally on a dead whale which had been buried for months, and therefore was rank and putrid. On the 25th of May we saw the Chilian brig of war 'Meteor,' Captain Martinez, and were brought to this port, arriving June 24. The consul has taken care of me, and the American captains here are very kind to me. We go home in the bark 'Eliza,' Captain Phillips, of Baltimore.

"This is the account of the awful tale. Only two saved out of nineteen: Robert Wells, called George on board the ship, and myself;



and I feel thankful to my God for his kindness in sparing my life. I have found three letters from home. Tell Louisa to be a good girl and mind Aunt Lydia, for now she has no dear father or mother. I would write to Thaddeus and Aunt Lydia, but the story is too awful I will now bring this to a close by bidding you good-by.

“Please excuse all blunders and bad writing.

“THOMAS EDWARD COFFIN.”

The interest felt by the community in the news from the “Manchester” was manifested in part by their deeds, as recorded in the following editorial, which appeared in the “Nantucket Inquirer:”

“Some weeks since we published the account of the wreck of the ship ‘Manchester’ of this port, and noted the kindness and liberality of the commander of the Chilian brigantine ‘Me-teoro’ to the son of Captain Coffin, in paying the savages the ransom promised by the boy, and in clothing and conveying him to the care of the American Consul at Valparaiso. The importance of the fulfillment of the obligations to the barbarous natives will be particularly

appreciated by the mariner, and possibly may be the means of rescuing many a shipwrecked sailor from a cruel death or hopeless bondage. The owners of the wrecked ship appreciated the humanity of the commander of the 'Meteor,' and Captain E. W. Gardner, of this town, addressed a note to the Secretary of State calling attention to his noble conduct; but our government had previously instructed its minister to express to the government of Chili its high appreciation of the kindness and humanity of Commander Martinez in rescuing the known survivors of the 'Manchester.'

"The Odd Fellows' Lodge in this town, of which Captain Coffin was a member, realizing the peculiar circumstances of the case, at once took measures to testify to Don Martinez their appreciation of his services to the cause of humanity, and especially to the bereaved son of a member of their Order. Accordingly, suitable resolutions were adopted, and a beautiful pair of goblets procured, to be presented to the gallant and noble-hearted sailor as a memento of their appreciation of his obedience to the dictates of an enlightened humanity.

The gift is inscribed in English and Spanish, as follows :

“ ‘ To Senor Don Bunaventura Martinez, commander of the Chilian brig-of-war ‘ *Meteoro*,’ from Nantucket Lodge, No. 66, I. O. of O. F., of Nantucket, Mass., U. S. A., as a testimonial of their appreciation of his humanity to the son of their deceased brother, Alexander H. Coffin, master of ship ‘ *Manchester*,’ wrecked near Cape Horn, in about 55 degrees south latitude, on the 28th of August, 1854.’

“ The goblets are of silver, lined with gold, and are exceedingly chaste and beautiful, the inscription particularly well executed. We sub-join the resolutions adopted by the Lodge of Odd Fellows in this place relative to Senor Martinez :

“ ‘ *Resolved*, That humanity owes a debt of gratitude to the gallant and noble-hearted commander of the Chilian brigantine ‘ *Meteoro*,’ Don Bunaventura Martinez, for rescuing from the savages the orphan son of our lamented brother, Alexander H. Coffin ; for fulfilling the promises of the boy to the Indians ; for treating him with whole-souled and parental kindness,

and for tenderly nursing him, and placing the bereaved youth in care of the United States Consul at Valparaiso.

“ ‘*Resolved*, That, keenly appreciating the disinterested nobleness of Commander Martinez, we will procure and present to him some token, as a memento that we are not forgetful of those who are so fully alive to the claims of humanity.’ ”

The goblets were forwarded as intended, and the spirit in which they were received may be seen by the following letter, which appeared in the “*Nantucket Inquirer*” of June 20, 1856 :

“ TO THE COMMANDERS OF THE LODGE OF NANTUCKET, No. 66 :

“ VALPARAISO, *April* 26, 1856.

“ GENTLEMEN: Acknowledging the receipt of your communication of the 12th of December of 1855, with the two silver cups accompanying it, and which were delivered to me in the name of your highly respectable Lodge, I must confess that I was agreeably surprised at the high honor which you conferred upon me. When I took charge of young Master Coffin, son of the unfortunate captain of the bark ‘*Manchester*,’ wrecked at Cape Horn, and bestowed upon him such cares as my means and situation per-

mitted, I can assure you I considered that I was only complying with a duty incumbent on every honest man, and obeying the sympathies which the unfortunate situation of the young man naturally inspired.

“I was well and fully compensated for whatever aid I gave him by the satisfaction I experienced at having gained my object, and in relieving him in his unfortunate condition ; and never for one moment did I imagine that my proceedings toward him would procure me the honorable demonstration which you have thought proper to confer on me.

“On the acceptance of your kind testimonial, I beg to render a due homage to your benevolent feelings, and express to you how highly I esteem your kind appreciation of my proceedings, the which I consider as the brightest page in my nautical career.

“I have the honor to subscribe myself, gentlemen, your most obedient servant,

“B. VENTURA MARTINEZ.”

## CHAPTER XI.

## TERRA DEL FUEGO.

Man loves knowledge, and the beams of truth  
 More welcome touch his understanding's eye  
 Than all the blandishments of sound his ear,  
 Than all of taste, his tongue.—AKENSIDE.

ONE of the objects in narrating the adventures of the orphan boy who forms the hero of these pages was to throw a little additional light upon the country in which he was a captive, or, in other words, to add to our small amount of knowledge relative to Terra del Fuego and its inhabitants.

S. G. Goodrich, in his "Parley's Cabinet Library," dismisses the subject in these words: "Of the several Indian tribes that inhabit that large tract of territory known by the name of Patagonia, and which terminates in the cold and desolate regions of Terra del Fuego, we can give no history. They are now, as when first discovered, mere savages, and have continued to occupy the soil with little

disturbance from Europeans. Their country is too poor and repulsive to tempt the cupidity of civilized man, hence it has remained in the possession of its original masters. As they have no history worthy of remembrance, so they have no means of preserving the memory of events; and thus, like the leaves of the forest, they live, pass away, and then slumber in oblivion forever."

The author of "Lights and Shadows of Sailor Life" thus speaks of Terra del Fuego as it seemed to him in 1838, while he was on board one of the vessels engaged in the Southern Exploring Expedition in charge of Commodore Wilkes: "At midnight of the following day we had a partial view of the rugged peaks of Terra del Fuego, and at eight o'clock A. M. entered the straits of La Maire. The land here presents rather a dreary appearance; the high peaks on either hand are covered with perpetual snow, although it is midsummer here."

This author likewise mentions that a portion of the party having climbed some of the high land in that vicinity, "had also a commanding view of the bay, and an indistinct view of Staten

Land, besides several small islands that interspersed the bay." As Thomas sailed from the southern portion of Terra del Fuego till he reached the Straits of Magellan, still finding islands all along the path, he has come to the conclusion that what has often been regarded as one island, and marked on our maps as such, is in reality a large number of islands of various sizes.

Captain Bourne, in the "Captive in Patagonia," says: "We next cast anchor in Saint Nicholas Bay, a beautiful harbor. Going on shore, we observed the names of a number of vessels that had preceded us through the straits carved upon trees, with the dates of the several inscriptions; we added our own to the catalogue. There were some deserted bush-huts, probably of Terra del Fuegians, who frequently cross over the straits in their canoes when fishing."

As Thomas has shown by his narrative, the natives of Terra del Fuego visit the Patagonia side of the Straits of Magellan not only for fishing, but for hunting; and it was probably in some of these excursions that the "John," and others who knew a little English, had obtained their knowledge.



Again Captain Bourne says: "As we beat up Crooked Reach, and passed the end of Carlos III. Islands, we discovered a white flag flying on the Terra del Fuegan shore. Thinking it might be the signal of some white people who had been shipwrecked, we stood over into the opposite channel, near enough to see Indians and their canoes on the beach, ready to pay us a visit. We hove about, having no desire to make their acquaintance, and anchored toward night in the beautiful Borga bay opposite."

Would it not have been better if that ship had taken still further precautions to learn the cause of the appearance of the white flag? Perhaps some shipwrecked captive, so long among the Indians that at a distance he might seem like one of them, was hoping, like Thomas, for the ship to tarry long enough for him to escape. One would think that the mockery of his precious hopes, when he saw a vessel receding in a similar manner while he was a captive, would have taught him a better lesson than to leave without being sure that no civilized being had hoisted that flag, if his pleadings could have

availed with the commander of the vessel in which he was sailing.

The natives of Terra del Fuego, like those of Patagonia, are exceedingly fond of wearing what they consider ornaments, in the shape of pieces of copper, brass, and the like, suspended from their necks. Thomas saw one of them thus ornamented with a dime, and another with a cent.

The men paint or bedaub their faces with a kind of red earth. Charcoal is used as a cosmetic. A broad line of red, alternating with a stripe of black in various fantastic figures, is a favorite style of decoration.

The women rub their faces with something like lime, in order, as they say, to cleanse them.

The natives are all short in stature, and rather stout, differing so essentially from the Patagonians as to mark them a distinct tribe.

The women seemed to Thomas to have more energy than the men. In hunting birds or goats, or in fishing, they were quite as successful as their male companions, and in many things seemed to be the dictators rather than the slaves of the men. Their maternal instincts

did not seem very strong ; at least, when the children would cry for food, the mother as often gave them a severe blow as the food they desired. If the father punished one, and the child crawled to the mother as if for protection, that mother would show her regard for the system of co-operation, whether the child was to blame or not, by striking it again.

The women had very little modesty, and Thomas was frequently urged to take a wife among them ; but his abhorrence of such a course was only equaled by his disgust for their filthy persons, and he resolutely declined all such proposals.

The boys of the tribe were very saucy to him, regarding him as the slave of their parents, and therefore a proper object of scorn and abuse. One day, when they had worn his patience threadbare by pelting him with rocks, he retorted by a threat that he would use the "corcheena," as they termed a knife, across their throats. They understood his signs, and from that day ceased to throw stones at him.

Thomas observed no insects in Terra del Fuego but the vermin that infested the filthy

bodies of the whole tribe. To relieve themselves of such company when they become too numerous for comfort, they use a comb made out of the lower jaw of a seal.

If these natives had anything which could be called religion, it was scarcely perceptible to Thomas. Their morals were far, very far below the Christian standard. The only ceremony which he observed was that the Indian men would go into their huts and commence a whining, monotonous sound, like "uah, uah," continuing it for a long period. Their wives would place their food near them when they wished to eat. Sometimes one would go up in a tree and make a harsh singing noise for a while, then come down and throw stones and sand violently at the huts.

Twice while Thomas was with them the women also had such an assembly as the men, with the same monotonous chant; but whether they were worshipping, or if so, whether they bowed to a good or evil spirit, Thomas had no means of ascertaining, as his knowledge of their language was very imperfect. One day the natives seemed to eat a quantity of pounded

glass, and then pointed upward, and after a few other ceremonies buried a tooth of a seal.

They also have a custom in smoking similar to that of the Patagonians. Their vessel for water is made of bark, instead of hide, and placed on the ground in the center of the circle which they form. Their pipe is then filled, and the company then lie down with their backs to the center, without drawing their seal-skin mantles over them as the Patagonians do. The pipe is lighted, and first one and then another inhales as much smoke as he can swallow, till all are satisfied. One by one they begin groaning and shaking till the smoke slowly passes out of their nostrils. Then they drink a little water, and after a little silence they rise and disperse. Whether this was a religious ceremony or not Thomas could not determine.

As was remarked before, the life of these natives is mainly spent in searching for food. In the winter season they inhabit the more northern islands, but in summer they roam about, as we have seen. Their life must be far from comfortable even to themselves, who might be supposed to be inured to it. To Thomas it

was almost unendurable. He could adopt the language of his brother captive, Captain Bourne, with very little change: "To live without any change of dress, to sleep without any additional covering, protected from the cold ground only by a fragment of seal-skin, and the other discomforts and exposures of life among the savages, made altogether a harsh contrast to the comforts of our good ship."

One paragraph in the "Captive in Patagonia" requires a little comment. Captain Bourne says: "One of them (the natives) had a deep scar on his breast, which he said was the mark of an arrow-shot received from the '*Tamaschoner*' Indians, a tribe that use the bow and arrow. His description suggested the probability that these were the Terra del Fuego Indians; but, on mentioning the conjecture at a later period to a person I met in the Chilean penal settlement, he informed me that those islanders invariably shoot *poisoned* arrows, which would not leave the victim much leisure to describe their effect."

But Thomas thinks the Chilean must have been mistaken, as he several times saw the pro-

cess of making arrows, and never saw anything placed upon them; nor can he imagine from whence they could obtain the poison, as nothing was pointed out to him as improper to touch or to eat. The probability is that the natives of Terra del Fuego, though cruel and bloodthirsty enough, as Thomas had reason to know, are yet not so depraved and malicious as the Patagonians.

It is hoped that future years may see the spread of truth and light even to those remote regions; and that no human being may ever be called, on those inhospitable shores, to suffer as much of the hardest, saddest discipline of life as did the orphan boy who was a captive in Terra del Fuego.

## CHAPTER XII.

## MORE ABOUT TERRA DEL FUEGO.

“Isles of the South, awake!  
The song of triumph sing;  
Let mount, and hill, and vale,  
With halleluiahs ring;  
Shout, for the idol's overthrown,  
And Israel's God is God alone.”

It is deemed proper to append to this narrative of life among the Terra del Fuegians a scientific account of the archipelago, as given by R. S. Fisher, M. D., in Colton's "Atlas of the World," a work compiled from the most authentic sources and published in 1855. Dr. Fisher there states:

“Terra del Fuego is the name given to the extensive group of islands or archipelago lying south of the Straits of Magalhaens, and forming the southern extremity of South America. It is situate between latitudes  $52^{\circ} 30'$  and  $55^{\circ} 59'$ , and longitudes  $63^{\circ} 40'$  and  $75^{\circ} 07'$  west from Greenwich, or  $1^{\circ} 55'$  and  $13^{\circ} 22'$  east from Washington. On the north it is separated from



the main land of America by the long and intricate Strait of Magalhaens; while its other sides are washed by three great oceans—the Atlantic on the east, the Pacific on the west, and the Antaretic on the south. Besides numberless small islands, of which Cape Horn, at its southern extremity, may be mentioned as one of the most remarkable, it consists of one very large island, Eastern Terra del Fuego, or King Charles's South Land, measuring east and west, near its south shore, five hundred miles, with a maximum breadth, north and south, of three hundred miles; and of four much smaller, but still very considerable islands, Navanno and Hoste on the south, separated from Eastern Terra del Fuego by Beagle Channel, and Clarence and De Tola on the west.

The whole of these islands are penetrated deeply by arms of the sea, which give them the most irregular shapes, and are almost entirely composed of mountains of clay slate, greenstone, and granite. These mountains are either covered with perpetual ice and snow, (which has here its limit at about four thousand feet, while many of their summits exceed five thousand feet, and

Monte Sanniento, in the southwest part of the largest island, supposed to be the culminating point, has an elevation of six thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight feet,) or are clothed with stunted forests, chiefly of beech, growing out of a swampy peat, apparently almost the only kind of soil in this region, and which beyond one thousand to fifteen hundred feet, where the trees cease to grow, becomes covered with minute alpine plants.

The term Land of Desolation, which Cook applied to the larger western island, is strictly applicable to the whole group; and yet the scenes, when mountain is seen rising behind mountain, with deep intervening valleys all covered by a thick, dusky mass of forest, is not without a degree of mysterious grandeur. At times two magnificent glaciers, of beryl-like blue, in fine contrast with the white expanse of snow, are seen descending from the mountain sides to the water's edge. The climate is one of the most wretched which it is possible to imagine. Fog, rain, and snow, accompanied either with continued storms, or violent and sudden gusts of wind, follow each other in constant succession.

Nevertheless this kind of climate, uncongenial as it is to plants of warmer latitudes, is far from being unfavorable to native vegetation; and hence, in some places, large woody-stemmed trees of fuschia and veronica, which in the United States are treated as tender plants, are seen in full flower not far from the base of a mountain with two thirds of its height covered with snow, and with the temperature at 36° Fahrenheit. The only other vegetable production particularly deserving of notice is a globular fungus of a bright yellow color, and the size of a small apple. It adheres in vast numbers to the bark of the beach-trees. When young it is elastic and turgid with moisture; but after fructification it acquires a mucilaginous and slightly sweet taste. In this state it is eaten by the natives uncooked, and forms a staple article of food, being, with the addition of a few berries of the dwarf arbutus, the only vegetable of which they partake. Another remarkable vegetable production is a seaweed called *fucus giganteus*, which, though not confined to this group, is here particularly abundant, forming great aquatic forests, and furnishing

the haunts of innumerable species of shellfish, but for which the race of Fuegians could scarcely exist.

The zoology of the group, however, is very scanty. Besides cetacea and phocæ, the only mammalia are but three species of mice, the fox, sea-otter, guanaco, and deer. Birds, particularly sea-fowl, are numerous; and even humming-birds have been seen sipping the sweets of flowers after two or three days of constant rain, snow, and sleet, during which the thermometer had been at the freezing point.

The natives of the northeast part of Terra del Fuego resemble the Patagonians in color and stature. Those of the southeast portion are low in stature, ill-looking, and badly proportioned. Their color is that of very old mahogany, or rather between dark copper and bronze. The trunk of the body is large in proportion to their cramped and rather crooked limbs. Rough, coarse, and extremely dirty, their black hair half hides, yet heightens a villainous expression of the worst description of savage features. The women are short, about four feet seven inches, with bodies also largely

out of proportion to their height; and their features, especially those of the old, are most repulsive. Their only clothing is a scanty covering of guanaco or seal-skin. In their habits they are most filthy, and in feeding gross and uncleanly; the most offensive substances being eaten in a state of putridity. They are, like most other savages, extravagant mimics, imitating all sorts of sounds and motions with marvelous and most amusing fidelity.

Their huts are generally found close to the shore, at the head of some small bay, sheltered from the prevailing winds. They are built of boughs of small trees stuck into the earth, and brought together at the top, where they are firmly bound by bark, sedge, and twigs. The usual dimensions of these huts are seven or eight feet in diameter, and about four or five feet in height, having an oval hole to creep in at. The fire is built in a small excavation in the middle of the hut. The floor is of clay, which has the appearance of having been well kneaded.

Terra del Fuego, in common with Patagonia, was discovered by Magalhaens in 1519, and in consequence of the number of fires seen along

the shores by that navigator was so named. Anglicized, the name signifies "Land of Fire." There is no possibility of ascertaining even an approximate enumeration of the inhabitants of this group; but analogically it is presumed to be small.

Professor Arnold Guyot, in his "Earth and Man," after commenting on the hideous ugliness of the South American Indians, closes thus disadvantageously to Thomas's captors: "Finally, at the extreme point of the continent, and in Terra del Fuego, live the Pecherays, the most misshapen, the farthest from any culture, the most wretched, of all the inhabitants of the New World."

A writer, in Harper's Monthly for January, 1864, gives an interesting account of his visit to Terra del Fuego in the year 1855, some six months after the escape of Thomas and George. He says that he came away with favorable impressions of the Fuegians, except one tribe, which had to be carefully watched, and whose people, since his visit, have massacred the captain and crew of the very vessel he then commanded. Very possibly this cruel and bloodthirsty tribe

was the one by whose hands Captain Coffin was slain. And the better class of Fuegians may have been some of the tribe with whom Thomas was a captive.

This writer says: "The first place I called at and communicated with the natives was at Picton's Island. Here several canoes came alongside, and then my acquaintance with the Fuegians commenced.

"The men were fine, powerful looking fellows, each in a state of savage nudity; but their wild hair and dirty and repulsive-looking bodies needed some previous acquaintance with such beings to admit of any near approach. The women, throughout that and every after interview, behaved in a manner that struck me as being very extraordinary for savages. The modesty of their conduct was very remarkable, and nothing could induce them to come on deck. One of the women was tolerably good-looking. She had a baby with her, and was most winning in her manner when she asked us to give her baby some presents. She was much attached to her child, even as I found all of the Fuegian mothers were; and I

feel certain that to attempt taking any of those younger children away, on any pretense whatever, is wrong in the extreme.

“The men, directly they came on deck, were clothed by us, but evidently they did not like such confinement of their limbs. One would insist on changing everything to exactly the contrary way; another would put a blanket round his shoulders instead of his body. Toys, beads, and especially necklaces and gilt ornaments, were eagerly sought for. They did not like a looking-glass when shown to them, but the music of a concertina delighted them exceedingly. Strange to say, I found all of the Fuegians I met with very honest in *barter*, though arrant thieves in regular stealing.

“The first visit I paid them on shore was by myself to their wigwams, at some distance off among the trees. I walked toward their dwellings, and was soon seated on a log of wood amid the whole family, men, women, and children. Their ferret-like dogs, however, were very troublesome to me; but the men seeing how I was annoyed, drove them away. Then we began one of those scenes I had often before



indulged in when visiting wild lands. I talked, I sang, I laughed, and danced with them to their heart's content for inviting me to their wigwam. I was placed at once in a post of honor, and far—so far as could be—from the intolerable smoke of their fire. At no time would they allow any of our party inside their wigwam but myself and a companion. Generally an old woman and some of the men placed themselves at the door, to prevent any of my crew from entering.

“Inside of this wigwam I found about twenty-two persons squatting round the fire. Some of the women and girls were marked with red and black ochre, and one woman would have been handsome if washed. All the females wore girdles, and some had skins on their shoulders and waists. Their friendly mode of salutation was anything but agreeable. The men came and gave me a hug, very much like the gripe of a bear. I felt as if squeezed in a vice. . . . The Fuegians did not seem to me so dwarfish as often represented. A few I measured were each over five feet three inches, and I believe some reach five feet seven. I may mention that I had a

difficulty in measuring them, owing to their constant endeavors to steal the tape out of my hands. Another thing I noticed was, that many of the Fuegians on the eastern islands were fine men, and some of them even handsome fellows. . . .

“My own opinion was that the Fuegian is a creature of circumstances, even more than most wild men are. The wretchedly moist and cold weather, with the high broken land on which he lives, make him deficient in those bolder and nobler qualities to be found among savages in more bracing countries. . . . Their habits are of the most primitive kind; and their dwellings on the eastern part of Terra del Fuego, are the conical wigwam, built from branches of trees over a hollowed space of ground. On the western parts their habitations are somewhat different. They reside in families; are very fond of their children; subsist principally upon shellfish and the *edible fungus*, and are remarkably expert with their slings. I believe they have a sort of property right among them, and I have seen one of the oldest women exercising authority over the rest of her people. On one

occasion, wishing to buy a canoe, it was refused me on the ground that it belonged to her and she would not part with it. They have a wizardman among them, who also seemed to have some authority. They are loud and furious talkers, and I soon found it was impossible in any ordinary way to get myself listened to. Accordingly I would now and then take my speaking trumpet and shout louder than they. This generally answered. It made them delighted with my supposed skill, and it showed them that the white man could be equal to themselves. In fact it was necessary so to do. In their rude state, wild men often fancy themselves our superiors in many things; and to rightly deal with them we must show that we can hunt, fish, talk, sing, dance, and endure hardship as well as they. That the Fuegians must be hardy, is proved by the fact that they experience so much cold, and yet wear no covering on their bodies. The only thing they do to keep warmth is to rub themselves over with grease and ochreous earth. In their wigwams they huddle round the fire, but owing to the smoke their eyes are always sore."

The above writer records an attempt to Christianize and instruct four Fuegians, three males and one female, who were taken to England in the "Beagle" at the time of the British survey under Captain Fitzroy. Three of these Fuegians were returned (one having died) to their native land after the lapse of three years, during which time two of them had been in a school near London. None of them were over nineteen, and the girl about fifteen.

But the instruction they had received was insufficient to make them civilized in their future conduct. They manifested the same cupidity, and were soon reduced to the same state of filth and savageness with their countrymen. The experiment was a failure.

An effort to Christianize these natives in their own inhospitable country also proved in vain. A captain in the English navy, Allen Gardiner by name, a man of faith and prayer, was zealous for their conversion to Christianity, and ventured his life among them, in order to lead them to Jesus. He went to Terra del Fuego in 1850—"taking two boats, a surgeon, a lay teacher, a carpenter, and four fishermen

from Cornwall, with six months provisions. These were landed at the place he desired; but unfortunately their powder was forgotten, and their dependence had to be upon the stores brought out, besides the hope of another supply (never furnished) coming to them.

“The first week foreshadowed the terrible result of this singular attempt at converting the Fuegians. Terror took possession of them when the natives came around. In their two small boats they fled from place to place. Here, there, and everywhere along the outer coast they hurried on, seeking for some shelter where they could rest secure. In vain! That rocky, tempest-driven coast, what long-voyage mariner knows it not by dangerous repute? And yet, upon its outer seaboard, or among its wild islets, did this band of zealous men traverse in their frail skiffs. At length they were obliged to return to the place where they first landed. But now they were not far from starvation; and still no ship came to their relief. Accordingly, they wrote upon the rocks, and buried in bottles, under marked trees, a few words telling of their fearful state.

“‘Hasten! haste! We are starving! We are starving!’ is what the rocks displayed in letters large and broad. But their agonizing appeal was in vain! No human eye of civilized life beheld their appeal till too late; and the only hope of reaching the more distant dwelling of Jemmy Button’s\* tribe, should he chance to be alive, was frustrated by the damage to their boats, and the fear of numerous bodies of fierce natives on the way. Finally, this ill-starred party went to a place called ‘Spaniards’ Harbor,’ and there, one by one, died from sheer starvation! The journals kept by the captain and doctor were afterward found, and the record disclosed a tale of suffering horrible in the extreme.

“For days and weeks did they live upon dead, cast up fish, weed, a few mice discovered, (which were a great luxury,) garden seeds, etc. Leather straps, boots, and such like were gnawed by the hungry mouths, until at last one after the other gave way. When two had died the rest were so enfeebled as to be hardly capable of burying them. The carpenter scooped out a shallow grave, but it took a day’s labor to do it. He

\* One of the natives once in England.

died next, and the lay-teacher covered him over. Then two more sank to rest, but no one could bury them; and when the place was afterward visited their bodies and bones were found washed about in the sand. Three were now left, the captain, doctor, and lay-teacher. But they were not together. Doctor Williams and some of the men had kept in one broken boat on the beach; and Captain Gardiner, with the teacher, a mile away in the other wrecked boat. Thus, when and how the doctor died was never known. As for the captain, it appears that he died in the boat, while the teacher perished in a cave close by. . . .

“When too late, a vessel was sent to see what had become of the party. Singularly, it was an American schooner from Montevideo. Captain Smyley, an old South Sea sealer, had command, and on arriving at Spaniard’s Harbor he relates that ‘the sight was awful in the extreme. Books, papers, medicine, clothing, and tools strewed along the beach, and on the boat’s deck and cuddy, but no sign of any edge tools whatever. The boat was on the beach with one person dead inside, and another on the beach com-

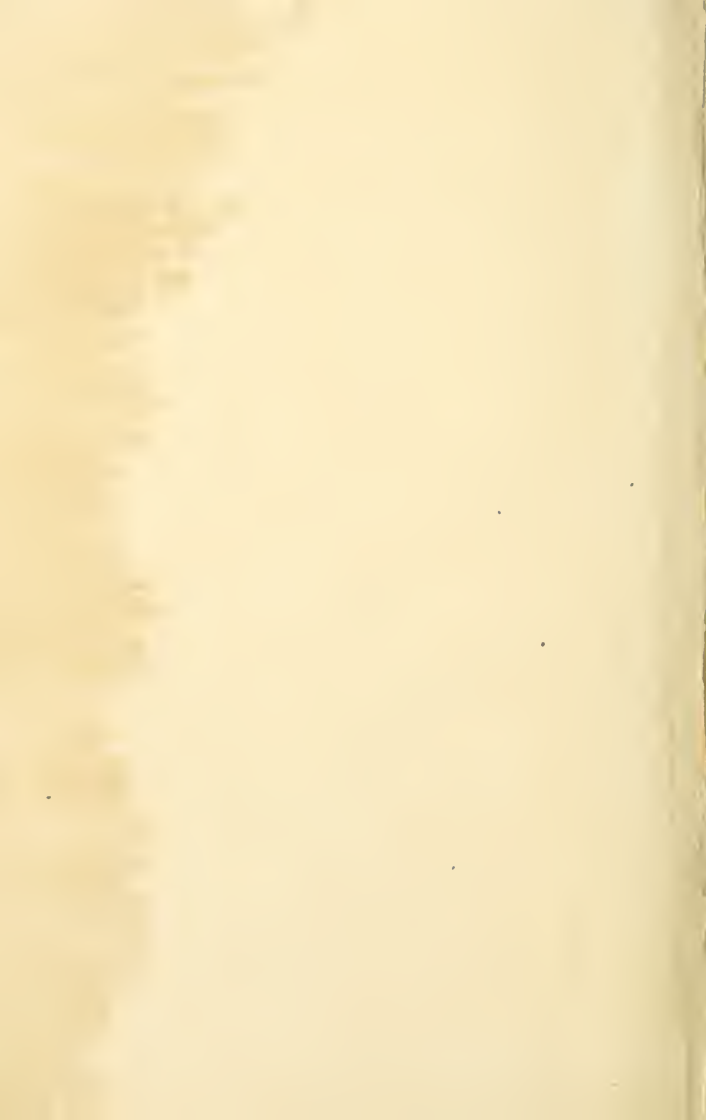
pletely washed to pieces, and another buried.' They called the place Starvation Bay."

Thus ended a sincere, but ill-managed attempt to Christianize these outcasts of the world. Yet the effort might possibly have terminated more favorably had the powder been remembered, and the supply of food been sure. No Christian heart need be discouraged at these successive failures. The promise is sure: "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

The time will come when even these outcast Fuegians will be "clothed and in their right mind," sitting at the feet of Jesus. The remembrance of what has been accomplished by faithful and untiring Christian effort in "shivering Greenland" and cannibal Fiji is an encouragement to hope and labor. The contrast of our rude, idolatrous Saxon ancestors, observing their Druidical rights and savage customs, with the present noble representatives of Christian culture in all lands, is an incentive to effort in behalf of these benighted natives of Terra del Fuego.







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